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WATER LILIES.

BY OLIVE BELL.

O, lilies sleep on the lake's sapphire bosom,
Uplift your pure faces from emerald nests;
Unfold spotless petals, that each odorous blossom
May imprison the glow that gold tips the crests
Of mountains whose rugged sides glisten with boulders,
Heights crowned with huge oaks, like sentinel soldiers,
Whose gray, barren, bleakness, frown down on thy face,
As if grudging thy blooms, their fair nesting place.

Fair lilies, whose vestal-like buds open slowly,
In cloisters of fibre, and green, clinging moss;
Thy humility typifies souls, meek and lowly,
That patiently suffer 'neath many a cross.
Who from childhood to manhood, outstretch weary hands
To the sunshine that brightens Hope's far-distant lands,
And uplift pallid faces when the western hills shine,
With the deep, vivid, splendor, of rare ruby wine.

Beautiful lilies! What lessons you teach,
As you dreamily float on the lake's sapphire bosom;
A world of white wonder, in the chalice of each,
Heaven's mystical glow, on each delicate blossom.
This desolate spot you enchant with your bloom,
Like beacons of Hope, soon through night's purple form
As you lift your pale brows to the blue summer sky,
Unseen and unnoticed, save by God's loving eye.

FOR LOVE OF GOLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GLORY'S LOVERS," "AN ARCH-IMPOSTOR," "RUSHED UP?" "A LOVER FROM OVER THE SEA," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"THE Priory's let!" says my brother Tom, as he eats his bread-and-marmalade.

"You go to Bath!" Gerald returns.

"Go yourself, and get your head shaved! I say it is let! Philip Marlowe told me so himself, and he ought to know. Some man turned up this morning all of a sudden, said he'd seen the advertisement in the paper, and took the house on the spot. You can go and ask Philip yourself if you don't believe me."

"Well I'm blessed!" ejaculates Gerald after a short pause, during which he helps himself to a large spoonful of golden syrup as an accompaniment to his slice of buttered toast, and, forgetting to wind the spoon slowly round and round above his plate, according to the approved method of dealing with syrup, deposits the sticky golden trail upon the tablecloth. "Fancy any one wanting that ramshackle old place!"

"Oh, you boys!" I cried despairingly, jumping up from my drawing and hurrying to a cupboard in search of the checked duster always kept near at hand in case of emergencies.

"Oh, you boys indeed! Come now—it won't do to lay everything to our charge, you know! What was the French gibberish you were reading to father last night? I know! It meant that a woman is at the bottom of all the mischief under the sun, although I can't remember the words," says Tom mockingly.

I am Hessie, otherwise Hester—Hester Juliet Gay, Doctor Gay's eldest daughter. There are five younger children, three boys—Tom, Gerald, and Sidney—and two little girls—Ruth and Rosamond. We have no mother; we lost her, alas, soon after Rosie was born! Since then, now nearly nine years ago, I have been housekeeper, governess, seamstress—everything by turns—to the various members of my devoted family.

They have not, on the whole, given me much trouble. We are a healthy happy circle, united too, although over-prone to indulge on the slightest provocation in sundry forcible expressions, such as "pig," "beast," "donkey," in respect to one another's shortcomings.

Our lines have fallen in fairly pleasant places. Father is a country doctor, and, being the only one for miles round Combe Royal, enjoys a large practice, which has descended honorably from father to son for the last hundred years.

There seems never to have been a time when a Gay was not at hand to administer pills and potions to Combe folk and the surrounding rural population. Dear mother was a Luxmore. Beyond that there is little to be said.

That one's grandfather was a wicked old Turk, who committed every crime under the sun, does not matter a scrap, of course, if the village church is hung all round with decaying old tablets bearing the arms, quarterings, and mottoes of the family, and the dust of long-departed Luxmores lies beneath the worn stones, with their half-effaced lettering, that pave the middle aisle up which we walk in solemn procession every Sunday morning.

No! Despite the certain vices and the very uncertain virtues that our ancestry on one side have been able to transmit to us, we can afford to congratulate ourselves, proud in the knowledge that we are Luxmores still, and, as such, on an equality with all the big-wigs in the county, although father does despise his own medicines, and our front door has on it a brass plate bearing his name and profession, all our arguments and entreaties having failed to induce him to give up the rambling old red brick house in High street, with its giant elm overshadowing the front gates, and its prim old walled garden behind, for the smart two-story Queen Anne villa standing in its own ornamental grounds about half a mile out of Combe, where old Richards the butler lived after his retirement from business.

But where was I? Oh, wiping up the syrup at the boys' tea-table! They always have tea in the schoolroom at half past five, as soon as they come back from Bishopsthorpe, the nearest town to our house, it being distant about three miles and a half.

They attended a grammar school there that is rather a famous one, having turned out a good many well-known scholars. Ruth and Rosie take their meal an hour earlier with old nurse, and, about six months ago, when I attained the dignity of eighteen years, I was promoted to the honor of sharing father's late dinner at half-past seven, and pouring out the cup of strong black coffee that he always likes before he settles himself to his books in the evening, or starts on an extra round of visits, which is more often the case than not, for somebody or other seems always in need of "Doctor."

The boys' tea hour always finds me at my post in the old schoolroom, which, though very shabby and inky, is thoroughly comfortable, and has the priceless advantage of possessing a French window opening into the garden, which is odorous just now with lilacs and wall flowers, for it is spring time, and the country is joyous once more with the singing of birds and the blossoming of flowers.

I am just pouring out a third cup of tea for Sid, and holding the sugar basin as high over my head as I can to prevent his emptying more than half its contents into his cup, when the schoolroom door opens, and father comes in.

"Well, boys, back in good time, I see, all of you! No impots then, I suppose?" It is thus punishment tasks detaining them after school hours are irreverently designated by Bishopsthorpe lads. "Hessie, my dear, have you a cup of tea to spare? I can't wait five minutes, for poor Mrs. Ray's baby has had another fit. I found a message in the surgery when I came in. The weather is warm to-day, and the dust, while driving, has made me thirsty, I suppose."

As he speaks, he draws a chair to the corner of the table, sitting down with a faint sigh, as though his day's work had tired him—poor dear father!—and I hasten to smuggle an extra spoonful of tea into the nearly exhausted pot, so that he shall have something better to drink than "grouts," as Jerry impudently calls them.

"Father," exclaims Tom, still bursting with the news he has given us, "have you seen Philip Marlowe to-day? Do you know that he has let the old Priory? I met him in Bishopsthorpe this afternoon, and he told me. The people have taken it for a year, I believe, and are coming in directly."

Jerry gives a long whistle.

"My eyes," says he, "Master Phil has been selling a pig in a poke this time with a vengeance! I wonder if he has let his tenants know what a piece of work there has been to get any one to stay in that house to take care of it since old Marlowe's death? I'll warrant the new-comers out and run before they've been there three months!"

"Nonsense, Jerry—nonsense! Your tongue's too long, my boy! It will trip you up one of these days, if you're not more careful!" says father, rather sharply for him. "There's no reason on earth why Philip should not let the Priory, if he likes, without telling a pack of old wives' stories about it. He himself can't live in the place for obvious reasons, and it's all going to rack and ruin for want of occupation. It's a good thing for the neighborhood that tenants have been found for the house, and I'm glad to hear it!"

"Perhaps the new people will find old Marlowe's money bags," suggested little Sid, who is known amongst us as the "Tiger," from his red hair and freckled face, in which we fancy there is some resemblance to a tiger lily. "Old Diggory, the sexton, says that old Marlowe comes out of his grave on moonlight nights to watch them, and that if he fancies any one guesses where they lie hidden, he carries them away and puts them somewhere else; that's why Philip has never been able to find them, and, when the cock crows——"

"He gets back into bed and pulls the tombstone over him!" cries Tom scoffingly. "Old Diggory sees him, I expect, when he comes out of the 'Three Blackbirds' on Saturday nights. What a precious little ninny you are, Tiger! I believe if any one offered you an elephant you'd try to swallow it whole!"

"Mr. Marlowe, sir, is in the hall, and wants to see you for a few minutes. He won't detain you longer," says Rebecca, the parlor maid, interrupting our family gossip by putting her white capped head within the schoolroom door.

"All right! Ask him to walk in here," says father genially.

Sometimes I wish he was not quite so genial. It is all the same to him if the room is untidy, the cloth tumbled and covered with crumbs, all the corners cut off the loaf because everybody will have a crust, and the home-made cake reduced to a mere remnant.

"People must take us as they find us," he always says when I remonstrate with him and suggest that the drawing room is the proper place for chance visitors.

I have given Rebecca sundry private lectures on the subject however, and she knows better now than to show any stranger into "Mesopotamia," as Jerry, who is the wit of the family, christened the schoolroom when he was a very little boy.

Philip is different, of course. He knows us and we know him too well to stick at trifles; and, if the village schoolmaster and the organist cannot make allowances for boys and their tiresome ways, I am sure I do not know who should.

Still, I cannot help jumping up and pulling the wooden bread trencher over the place where Jerry dropped the syrup, when I heard footsteps advancing down the tiled passage.

Mr. Marlowe comes into the schoolroom with a big bunch of blue and white violets in his hand.

"I expect my news is stale already, but I couldn't help looking in to be congratulated," he says, with a pleasant smile.

"Nice" is pre-eminently a schoolgirl's adjective, I know. Somebody—I don't remember who—once said that the word should never be used except in reference to something eatable or drinkable. Without feeling in the least inclined to eat Philip Marlowe, I still hold the opinion that he is nice, and that is much better even than saying he is handsome.

Mr. Marlowe is a tall pale-faced man, with slightly stooping broad shoulders, a pair of earnest dark-gray eyes, and a head of crisp curly brown hair, in which a good many silver threads are already scattered, although he is still under thirty.

"Yes—I am in luck for once, am I not?" he goes on with a faint sigh, as he seats himself in the chair that Tom vacates on receiving a kick under the table from me, and lays the flowers he has brought quietly beside my tea tray. "To think of the old place being taken just as it stands, for twelve months certain, and at a rental of $500 a year! I never dreamed of getting that price, although I asked it, and should have been glad to let the old house for half the sum if it had been offered to me. However, I don't fancy money seems much of an object with my tenants."

"Who are they, and where do they come from?" asks father, while I get a cup and saucer and pour out tea for Philip, and Rebecca, the parlor-maid, mindful of past admonitions she has received from myself, makes her appearance with a fresh plate of bread and butter, cut purposely for the visitor.

"The name is Aylmer. 'Mr. Hastings Aylmer' is on the card the gentleman left with me, and which bears the address of some London club. They have just returned from abroad, he and his wife, so he tells me," says Philip, stirring his tea thoughtfully. "He's a foreign looking fellow, awfully well dressed and all that sort of thing. I saw him eyeing my coat with evident disdain. I nearly told him I should be able to afford a new one now that I had let the Priory"—glancing laughingly at his shabby gray coat, which is always so well brushed and tidy that one hardly notices how threadbare the seams are becoming till one gets quite close to him. "I don't know that I like the man's looks much; but he seems very accommodating and easily satisfied, which, after all, is the great thing in letting a dilapi-

dated old dwelling like mine. Mrs. Aylmer is an invalid, it appears, and the doctors recommend her some quiet country place with salubrious air, where she can be out of doors under trees as much as possible without fatigue. Society they don't care for, or, rather, her state of health precludes her from mixing much in it, husband says. He himself seems rather of a social turn, and asked a lot of questions about the neighborhood, and inquired particularly if there was a good medical man near at hand. I fancy it will not be long before your services are required at the Priory, Doctor.

"Well, whether they are or not, I'm glad the old house is to be opened again, although I wish you could be living there yourself, my dear fellow!" says father kindly, pushing back his chair and rising from the table.

"But it's a long lane that has no turning, recollect, and you're a young man yet. Your grandfather's money will turn up unexpectedly some day, take my word for it! And in the meantime you have acted, in my opinion, as reasonably and prudently as any one could, in remaining quietly here, earning your bread in an honest manly fashion amongst people who know and respect you. It is all very well, this craze that has set in for young fellows to dash off to the Colonies and arrive there with a few pounds in their pockets, and the most sublime ignorance of what may be required of them, or whether their physique, constitution, and temperament are at all fitted for the work they are undertaking, putting aside altogether previous education and past habits of life. For one success achived out in the Colonies, take my word for it, there are hundreds, thousands, of failures of which nobody in this country ever hears! Better a three-legged stool in an office in old England, to my thinking, than a prospective orange-grove in Florida, or an El Dorado, never realised, in Manitoba! Don't you agree with me?"

"Y-e-e—I suppose so," replies Philip rather absently.

He has risen from his seat, and is standing, with one elbow on the mantelpiece, gazing through the open window at the grass plot outside, where a blackbird is hopping gaily round the foot of the old sun dial, in search of worms for his evening meal.

"Honestly speaking, though," he continues, after a rather long pause, "I must confess that my original intention was to emigrate, when I found that my grandfather's death brought me no benefit. It is only the haunting idea that eventually the money that has disappeared so mysteriously must come to light, and—and other reasons, that have kept me in Combe Royal so long."

Unluckily his eye catches mine as he speaks, and something—I am sure I cannot tell what it is—makes me turn suddenly as red as fire. How detestable it is to color up for nothing, as I am always doing! And the worst of it is that the angrier one feels with oneself for being so stupid the redder one becomes.

Jerry sees the flush immediately, of course.

"I say, just look at Hessie!" he exclaims provokingly, thereby causing no fewer than five pairs of curious eyes to be turned at once towards my unfortunate countenance. "She is exactly like a turkey-cock!" the boy goes on. "One would think she had been helping herself to old Marlowe's money bags, to see her face!"

"Here—you shut up, you impudent rascal! What do you mean by speaking of my late grandfather in such a disrespectful manner?" exclaims Philip, seizing the boy by the shoulders in mock anger and giving him a slight shake.

This is the beginning of a wrestling match between the two, which ends in Gerald's darting out of the window on to the lawn, and running down the holly-hock walk. Mr. Marlowe follows.

Another urgent message from the unfortunate Mrs. Ray, relative to her baby, has caused father to hurry off to the surgery, leaving word with me that, if Philip wants to see him about anything else, he had better look in again later on.

Tom and the "Tiger" have both lounged away to their different pursuits, and I am just locking up the tea-caddy, when Philip Marlowe comes in to the schoolroom and stand besides me without speaking.

The caddy has the most tiresome lock in the world, I do think! The key goes round and round in it, sometimes without catching a bit;and, when one has somebody else's brown hand closed tightly over one's own, pretending to help, but really only hindering——

"Hester," says Mr. Marlowe very softly, with his lips close to my ear, "do you know why I have stayed in Combe Royal for a whole year instead of going out into the world, as I decided to do on finding myself a pauper, when I expected to be a rich man? Answer!"

I shake my head. I would give worlds, if I possessed them, to be able to run away, but somehow my feet seem glued to the shabby red square in the carpet on which I stand. The horrible color is rising to my face again, too, I declare! Feeling an overpowering shyness, I naturally take refuge in being flippant.

"How should I know? Old Marlowe's mon——" I begin.

Philip turns from me with impatience.

"For Heaven's sake, spare me that wearying reiteration!" he says almost roughly. "What do I care for the scurvy trick my grandfather chose to play on his only living representative? It was simply consistent with the principles that governed his life—that's all! Excepting as a means to an end, his wretched money would be of no value to me! But that without it I dare ask no woman to share my life, the old dotard might have taken it with him for all I should have cared!"

I have succeeded in withdrawing my hand from his by this time, and have secured the keys, which I am now jingling in my muslin-apron pocket with quite a careless air.

"Do you know, Mr. Marlowe, I think you are a little inconsistent. You were scolding Jerry only a few minutes ago for speaking disrespectfully of your late grandfather, and now you yourself are calling him all sorts of disrespectful names. If I should chance to find out some day where his fortune lies hidden, I think I shall keep the secret to myself, just to punish you!"

"Do so by all means!" says Philip, drawing closer to me again.

I wish he would not do so! What if one of the boys were to come in and see him?

"My one idea," Philip goes on, as I do not answer, "if the money were discovered to morrow, would be to share——"

He pauses, his speech being stopped abruptly by what I am afraid I must call a parrot-like screech from myself. I ought to have more self-control, of course, but really to feel one's ankle suddenly seized in a vice-like grasp, without any visible presence to account for it, is enough to make anybody scream, and the trouble is not much lessened by the sudden appearance of the red head and freckled face of the "Tiger," upturned from beneath the folds of the white cloth that covers the table beside which we stand.

"Tiger, you are the most abominable—— Let go!" I shout wildly, hopping with frantic energy upon one leg in my futile efforts to escape from his grasp.

Could anything be more undignified? I am sure it is to spare my feelings that Mr. Marlowe, muttering what I am afraid is a rather strong expression, seizes his soft felt hat and takes his departure.

Left alone, I do battle valiantly with my foe, and he retires with boxed ears, but triumphant still at having played his trick so finely.

It is very tiresome really. It would have been just the same if I had wanted very much to hear what Philip was going to say to me; but, of course, not even in the middle of the great desert would it be possible to get free from those boys.

When I am married, I hope my children will be all girls—they are ever so much nicer! Yet father is nice, and Mr. Marlowe is very nice; and I suppose they were boys once.

But, of course, there are exceptions. Besides one feels sorry for Philip—his grandfather was such an old wretch, driving his son away from home by his cruel treatment, and then never seeing him again, although he was terrible poor and dying of consumption, so that he could not work for his wife and child.

Father says Philip behaved like a hero in sticking to his mother, refusing to leave her at the time of her father's death, when old Marlowe offered him a home on condition that he left his widowed mother to shift for herself.

All through his childhood and boyhood they struggled along together, with not a farthing of help from that wicked old man—it would be no wonder if no spirit did wander about the old Priory and the grounds now, as people say it does, unable to rest, after the life he led and his cruel treatment of his children—and I believe young Mrs. Marlowe, who was a gentlewoman born and bred, made shirts and gave music-lessons to keep Philip at school.

Matters became rather better as he grew older and could earn money for himself. Somehow or other he obtained employment at a printer's, and then it was discovered that he had a talent for writing; and he contributed articles to all sorts of papers, for which he was paid.

It was up-hill work, of course, but still he managed to earn enough to keep himself and his mother from want. After a while, too, he made a "hit," as they call it—wrote a pamphlet that caused a stir in the literary world, and awoke one morning, like somebody else—I cannot remember who at this moment—to find himself famous.

It was like Philip's luck—or, rather, his want of it—that just then, when Fortune seemed inclined to smile upon him a little, after averting her face for so long, his mother, who had been everything to him all his life, should fall desperately ill of some hopeless internal ailment, brought on, the doctors said, by long years of ceaseless anxiety and privation, and involving a terrible amount of suffering to the poor invalid.

For two years she lingered, confined to her bed more than half the time, her son her only nurse and companion. Again and again he brought him to let her go into some hospital or institution, where she could be properly cared for and waited on, without his wasting his whole life and ruining his prospects by attending to her day and night. In spite of all her entreaties however, Philip stood firm—never wavered.

When at last the end came, and, worn out with pain, she died with her hand clasped in his, he was nearly worn out too. The doctors feared serious consequences to his nervous system from the constant strain, bodily and mental, to which he had so long been subjected.

I suppose it must have been about a year after Mrs. Marlowe's death that old Peter Marlowe of the Priory, her father-in-law, died too. He had been the talk and terror of Combe Royal, more or less, all his life.

Mothers were wont to frighten rebellious children into obedience with the threat that "Old Peter" would come and carry them off bodily if they did not behave properly.

Awful tales of his harshness and cruelty to his own family were circulated, not only in the immediate neighborhood, but for miles around. His only son, Philip's father, had run away from home when a mere lad; his daughter Rachel had grown up a miserable neglected girl beneath his roof, and finally, revolting from his tyranny, had also vanished suddenly, leaving no trace behind her.

My father, summoned late one night to the old man's bedside, found him dying alone and untended except by an infirm half-witted woman known as "Deaf Molly," the only person who had been employed for some years previously at the Priory by old Peter Marlowe. His last moments had actually come when my father arrived; and I believe he died shaking his fist and shouting violently at Molly for fetching the Doctor to him.

The sensation he made in the neighborhood during his lifetime was nothing however, compared with that which followed his death. All the world—at least, the Combe Royal world—had imagined that Peter Marlowe was a rich man.

In his early days Peter had been a spendthrift; indeed, he and my mother's father, Godfrey Luxmore, were sworn allies and boon companions; and it was only after Squire Luxmore broke his neck one day while out fox hunting that Peter Marlowe suddenly changed his mode of life.

But, notwithstanding the substitution of penury for lavish excess, of the most sordid economy for unbridled extravagance and waste of all kinds, nobody ever supposed want of means to be the cause of the old man's changed habits.

The whole community, therefore, was astounded when, on examination of Mr. Marlowe's papers after his death—a duty which, there being no relatives or even friends of the deceased present, fell to the lot of Mr. Grey, the old Rector of Combe Royal, and Mr. Marvin, the leading lawyer in Bishopsthorpe—no document of any kind relating to the disposition of his money, no will, no banker's book, not even an old check was to be found affording the faintest clue as to the investment of his capital, what income he was in receipt of at or immediately prior to his death, or from what sources it was derived.

In the drawer of an old oak writing table in his bedroom was a certain sum of money in gold and silver, tied up in a dirty canvas bag—to which was attached a parchment lable, with the words "For my funeral expenses" scrawled upon it in the old man's own cramped handwriting; and inside, among the jingling coins, was an estimate for a plain funeral, made out by a certain cheap furnishing firm in Bishopsthorpe, and dated about a year previously, the sum contained in the bag being actually identical with the total stated in the estimate, and not a single halfpenny over. That was the only money discovered.

Strenuous efforts on the lawyer's part to trace old Marlowe's wealth failed. Many years previously the old man had banked in Bishopsthorpe, with the firm of Peters & Co., who had been established in the old town for upwards of a century; but one day, in a huff, he withdrew all his money from there, thus inconveniencing the bank considerably, and no one had the faintest idea as to where he had placed it.

Not being a landowner—for, expecting the fast-decaying old house, with its surrounding gardens and two or three fields, he possessed no property in the county—he was, of course, in receipt of no rents; and, on the lawyer's applying for information to certain railway and mining companies in which Mr. Marlowe had shares when banking with Messrs. Peters, a list of which the bankers had supplied, every reply received was to the same effect—that Mr. Peter Marlowe had sold out of the concern some years previously, and that his name had been consequently erased from the list of shareholders at the time.

Naturally the inquiry for the missing money did not last long. There being absolutely no funds with which to carry it on, it was a rather thankless office for those who could not expect to derive much benefit from the money even if it were found; and, after the Priory, from garret to cellar, had been diligently ransacked—so diligently ransacked that every worm eaten piece of furniture possessed of a drawer was brought to light and the drawer turned upside down, and every mouldy evil-smelling cupboard had been emptied of its contents—to the discomfiture of the numberless cockroaches, spiders, rats, and mice that had inhabited the place unmolested for years—without so much as a scrap of paper affording the slightest clue to what the old man had done with his reputed wealth turning up to reward the searchers, the interest in the matter began to languish, and the affair become the subject of a joke in Combe Royal.

When any one received an unexcepted parcel by post, or any of the boys a mysterious present that required unpacking, somebody was sure to remark—

"Old Marlowe's money-bags come to light, of course, and sent here by mistake—depend upon it!"

I believe it was my father who first suggested the insertion in some of the leading newspapers of an advertisement for the next-of-kin of "Peter Marlowe, of the Priory, Combe Royal, in the county of Southshire, deceased."

It was thirty years since young Marlowe had run away from home as a lad, hardly of age, and fifteen years since Rachel, his sister, who was ten years his junior, had disappeared. Rachel, my father often told us, was a fair, blue-eyed, timid creature, who might have been a pretty girl enough had she been kindly treated and allowed some of the advantages of her station; but, as it was, her mother having died at her birth and left her entirely to the mercies of the old tyrant Peter, she grew up almost half-witted, and, although she was twenty-five years old when she disappeared, she had hardly the sense of a child of twelve.

A mystery hung over her fate, which had never been satisfactorily solved; but everybody knew that her brother had left his father to seek employment in London, and that, after years of struggling and privation, he had died, leaving a widow and a young son behind him; and it was this son, now grown of course to man's estate, for whom they advertised after old Marlowe's death.

If the money was to be found, he was undoubtedly the proper person to look for it, and, even if it were never traced, at any rate there was the old Priory standing unoccupied, waiting for some one to come and claim it.

Six months after the advertisement appeared in the newspapers, Philip made his appearance amongst us. I remember perfectly well the day he arrived.

I was the first person who spoke to him, for I happened to be in the post office, buying stamps of old Mrs. Grimble, who is as deaf as a pillar post, when he looked in at the door to ask the nearest way to the Priory, and, as he might have talked to the old woman for an hour without finding out anything he wanted to know, I

thought the best plan was to tell him myself.

"If you want to take a short cut to the house," I said, "you must turn down the road opposite, go on till you come to the church, and then turn in at a white gate leading into a field on your left. Cross the field, and when you get into the high road again you will see the chimneys of the Priory peeping over a plantation of pine trees. A few yards more to your right will bring you in front of the Priory gates."

Anybody might have understood such plain directions as these, I thought, but Mr. Marlowe showed himself extraordinarily stupid.

I have since had reason to suspect that his failure to understand was mere pretence; but at any rate it resulted in my walking with him to show him the way; and before we had reached the end of the church lane I had recognized in my companion such an exact likeness to the portraits of all the departed Marlowes hanging up in the dining-room at the Priory that I concluded he could be no one else than old Peter's grandson, as indeed he proved to be.

All this happened a year or more ago; and Philip has settled down amongst the Combe Royal folk as if he had lived here all his life.

He does not live at the Priory, for, the post of village schoolmaster and organist to the church being vacant, Mr. Grey offered it to him, and, although he is such a great scholar and the place is quite beneath him, he accepted it thankfully as providing him with employment for the present, while his future remains so undecided and his health still unsatisfactory; and, of course, he prefers to live close to the school, in the schoolmaster's cottage, a little gable-ended house covered with creepers, and with a honeysuckle porch, which is delightful to sit in.

Old Marlowe's money is still missing, and seems likely to remain so. Philip clings strongly to the idea that it is hidden somewhere about the Priory, and every chimney has been examined and all the floors have been up in the hope of finding it, but with no satisfactory result.

Meanwhile, the advertisement for the next-of-kin of old Marlowe is still inserted from time to time in the newspapers in the hope of obtaining news of Rachel Marlowe, Philip's aunt.

No one has ever heard anything of her since she disappeared when twenty-five years old, fifteen years ago. She must be a woman of forty by this time, if she is living, and Philip thinks she would be more able probably than any one else to throw some light on the old man's past proceedings could she be found; but I am afraid the chance of that is rather a poor one.

Certainly the letting of the Priory for a twelve-month is a stroke of luck! It was impossible to get caretakers to remain in the old house as they were perpetually encountering old Marlowe's ghost in all likely and unlikely places.

No native of Combe Royal could be induced to spend a night on the premises, and the consequence was that the house was actually falling to pieces for want of occupation, and this caused Mr. Marlowe suddenly to determine to try and let it.

It is still a marvel to me how any one could take the place, for it is in the last stage of shabbiness from garret to cellar, not to mention actual repairs required in many of the rooms. But there are the boys! I must put this away at once.

CHAPTER II.

SUNDAY morning. The bells are ringing for church. On the grass-plot at the back of the house our whole family is gradually assembling. It is perfect weather.

A soft gray haze hanging about the horizon and half obscuring the tender blue overhead gives promise of intense heat later on in the day. Spring is dying slowly, overwhelmed by summer's too ardent embraces.

The lilacs droop, pallid and faded; every minute faint balmy breezes send showers of yellow laburnum petals down upon the grass from the withered gold chains above; but in their stead opening roses—crimson, pink and yellow—the creamy buds of the giant syringa, the honeyed fragrance of the modest sweet-nancies give promise of perfuming the breath of leafy June.

"We are a good looking lot, on the whole, I must say!" remarks Tom, joining the family group, and glancing round complacently, as he gives his tall hat an extra polish with his sleeve, in imitation of father, and places it on his head, frowning ferociously to make it settle comfortably.

"Perhaps it would have been better if Hessie had not contrived to start a freckle exactly on the tip of her nose; but still, bar that, she does not look amiss. Mr. Hastings Aylmer will be asking who that pretty girl in cream color is, if he turns up at church to-day. I wonder where he will sit. Somewhere well in sight, I hope. One does not get the chance of staring a stranger out of countenance in Combe Royal every day in the year."

"Well, you will be able to scrutinise him to your heart's content, I should think, this morning. Of course, he will be in the Priory pew," I say, struggling with a difficult button on one of my long tan gloves, the other glove dangling limply on the edge of the old sun dial.

I am in a serene humor to-day. Despite the freckle on my nose, my appearance in my little looking-glass up-stairs afforded me considerable satisfaction. A sort of Sabbath calm, the result possibly of new clothes and bright sunshine, pervades my spirits. It being Sunday, the boys are tolerable, chastened as they are by their neat Eton jackets and exceptionally stiff turn-down collars.

"Sit in the Priory pew? Why, yes—of course he will! I never thought of that!" exclaims Jerry. "Really, Hessie, you are becoming quite a Socrates in your old age!"

"Don't you believe it. She got a note from Philip this morning. Aha, miss, I saw Jemmy Grimes bring it to you!" cries the irrepressible "Tiger," executing a war-dance around a bed of yellow pansies. "Let's make a song about them!

"'Philly writes a silly billy;
Hessie answers willy nilly!'"

"Boys and girls—boys and girls, what a noise! Come, it's two minutes past the quarter—we shall be late for church! Now Hessie, my dear!" says dear father, bustling out by the schoolroom window. He is dressed in his Sunday coat and tall hat.

His appearance on the scene checks the hostilities which the "Tiger's" impudent speech have rendered imminent on my part. It is really too unbearable that one cannot receive a note from the organist to say that, at the Rector's request, the hymns have been changed, without a stupid schoolboy making a joke of it, and when one leads the choir too!

I turn my back resolutely on the "Tiger's" ridiculous antics, and, to hide my irritation, occupy myself with rearranging the daisies with which my two little sisters' hats are trimmed.

Father has already arrived at the green gate in the wall at the bottom of the garden, and when I join him is holding it open for me to pass through. The other members of the family bring up the rear in straggling fashion as we cross the two fields, all silver and gold now with myriads of daisies and buttercups, that separate us from the leafy lane leading to Combe Royal church.

At the gate of the churchyard quite a fashionable little crowd awaits us.

There are the Misses Greys, sisters of our old Rector, who is a bachelor, and whose household is presided over by no less than three substantial guardian angels in the shape of a trio of maiden sisters; there is blind old Mrs. Molesworth, in a smart new bonnet with peach-colored strings, leaning on the arm of a long-suffering, alpaca-clad companion rejoicing in the name of Chaffy; and there is Sir Gregory Diggle, the brewer and newly-made Baronet, who has just erected a lordly pleasure-house on the heights overlooking Combe Royal, and who drives in from this earthly paradise, which he has christened "Digglesmere," every Sunday morning in an open carriage with coachman and footman in smart drab and crimson livery, accompanied by Lady Diggle—a meek, worried-looking little woman whose honors are evidently too much for her—his son and heir—a hideous boy of ten or so—and the private tutor, a pale-faced young man with spectacles—who plays the fiddle feebly at Lady Diggle's "Friday afternoons," and occasionally ventures upon a song, which he sings so softly that he gives one the impression that he is afraid somebody will hear him.

Going to church is regarded as a kind of mild dissipation in Combe Royal, and, although in winter the event is apt to be disappointing—for who could look stylish in a waterproof and goloshes?—it is very different when once the summer has arrived, and the reign of light fabrics and flower-decked hats and bonnets has begun.

To-day, perhaps because of the fine weather, or it may be owing to the prospect of an addition to our social circle in the shape of the new tenants of the Priory, everybody is resplendent; even Lady Diggle rejoices in a new bonnet, her small wrinkled face being surmounted by a tuft of rose-colored feathers, which tremble unceasingly in the soft summer breeze; while the Misses Grey are all three crowned with wreaths of very yellow cowslips.

We are all in good time too. This too may or may not be due to a laudable desire for information respecting the unknown tenants of Mr. Marlowe's old house.

"My dear, the Priory people arrived last Tuesday!" says Miss Amanda Grey, the youngest of the Rector's sisters, fluttering up to me in a rather too juvenile fashion. "And the weather has been so fine! Don't you think it seems a little odd that no one has seen anything of them? I do hope they don't mean to be very exclusive! It's most desirable that one should be sociable in a small circle like ours—isn't it?"

It is astonishing how, within the last year or so, Miss Amanda, who used to take me out in the Rector's pony-carriage to gather primroses, and who use to give me apricot jam for tea, has suddenly begun to treat me as a contemporary—as though the great gulf of years between us were as nothing. On the present occasion she links a bony arm with almost oppressive familiarity in one of mine, and draws me with her along the narrow churchyard path, catching her great red sunshine remorselessly in the soft cream-silk puffing on the brim of my big Gainsborough hat, and making it very difficult to for me to avoid treading on the grassy hillocks on either side of us.

"Rather mysterious, I fancy," she continues, lowering her voice to a whisper, putting her lips so close to my ear that they actually tickle it.

"They say Mr. Hastings Aylmer gives all the tradespeople their orders at the back-kitchen door! Strange, isn't it? Almost as though they did not wish to admit any one to the house. Staines the butcher told cook that even the leg of mutton was taken in yesterday by the black boy. Did you not know they had a black boy? No? Well, my dear, you do surprise me! Some of the school-children met him in the Priory lane a day or two ago. He is a regular negro, with woolly hair; and he is dressed in colored pocket-handkerchiefs. He frightened Polly Grimes so dreadful that her mother says she has bad indigestion ever since. No one has seen any other servants about the place. They have not arrived yet, perhaps. Rather uncomfortable, I should think! But people from abroad have such strange ways, and possibly they don't mean to keep up any establishment while they are in the country. Come here to economise probably! They—— Goodness, there's Pontifex!" she exclaims, as the Rector's tall ungainly figure appears at the little gate leading from the Rectory garden into the narrow path that ends in the low-browed vestry-door. "We must go in at once!"—and, without completing the sentence she began before the appearance of her brother, Miss Amanda flutters away from me towards the church porch, into which all the Sabbath worshippers, gentle and simple, are slowly filing—a motley-garbed straggling procession.

Combe Royal church is an ugly enough edifice inside, although outwardly, built of gray stone and ivy-clad, it is undoubtedly picturesque. Part of it—the chancel in which our family pew is situated—is of much greater age than the body of the church, which is comparatively modern, and possesses several recently added stained glass windows, their gaudy hues contrasting somewhat unfavorably with the little leaded panes of ancient greenish glass by which the older portion of the building is lighted.

The congregation is similar to the congregations of country churches generally. There is a sprinkling of smock frocks and corduroys; there are three or four rows of giggling school children, boys and girls; here and there a pew is filled with smart bonnets and liveried men—the servants from Digglesmere, Squire Thornhill's establishment from the White House, and one or two others; then old Mrs. Molesworth and the long suffering Chaffy occupy a long pew with faded red cushions and quite a large stock of tattered old prayer books all to themselves; and the lawyer's family, consisting of six girls, ranging in age from eighteen down to eight, half a dozen well-to-do farmers, with fat wives and appallingly smart daughters, complete the assemblage.

As the last and only representatives of the Luxmore race, we occupy the old family pew in the chancel, which has been the Luxmores' by right as long as Combe Royal church has existed.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

A BIG ONE.—In the New Year's procession at Konigsberg in 1756 a bologna sausage exhibited by the "butchermen" was 622 feet in length, and was carried on the shoulders of 67 men and boys. The one exhibited in the same city in the year 1583 was over 1600 feet in length, and weighed 434 pounds.

THE JACKAL.—In hunters' lore there is an idea that the jackal is the lion's provider; that he locates the game and takes the lion to it. This superstition has no more foundation than is found in the fact that after a lion has slain his quarry, the jackals always attend and wait the conclusion of the repast, in order to pick up the leavings.

AN OLD SOLDIER.—There once was a crow in Ceylon that was called the "Old Soldier," because it had lost half a leg in the wars. Its delight was to tease a certain dog. It used to lie in wait at mealtime and provoke the dog, which showed its annoyance by repeated barking. Then, when the animal was snarling its angriest, the crow would coolly seize a bone, or other tit-bit, and fly away with it to a tree close by. Here, perched upon the branch, it calmly ate the toothsome morsel, while the dog stood below barking at it more furiously than ever. But the dog's rage was only an added joy, a sort of sauce, to the crow's stolen meal.

MISNAMED BY THE ENGLISH.—Ask any hundred English men, women, or children what is the name of the capital of Russia, and every one of them will reply, "Saint Petersburg." It may be a small matter, but in point of fact the proper name is "Petersburg." The English are, it is said, the only folk who insist upon the "Saint." The city was founded by Peter the Great and is named after him. It is quite true that Peter was one of the most extraordinary men that ever filled a throne, but no one would have been more astounded than himself at being dubbed a saint. He neither lived nor died in the odor of sanctity, and it is hard to find out how it became the English fashion to miscall the splendid town he founded.

BEWARE OF THE OSTRICH.—But for its beautiful feathers the ostrich would not have been tamed and kept in farms. In Senegal, as in other parts of Africa, a great trade is done in those feathers. The natives of Senegal, however, have never taken kindly to the bird, for a good but very extraordinary reason. As is well known, the ostrich is passionately fond of everything bright and shiny. Now, it happens that the black bairns' eyes are unusually brilliant. So when the birds were first tamed, it was noticed that they used to peck at the eyes of the children, often inflicting serious injury, and even causing blindness. Naturally enough, the natives refused to have anything to do with such a creature, and ostrich-farming came almost to a standstill.

HOW HE GOT A SALARY.—Colley Cibber, who was well known in the eighteenth century as a dramatist, and who was also Poet Laureate, had a great fondness for the stage. While a young man he acted for nothing rather than not act at all. Of course, at first, they gave him only the very smallest parts to play. At last he was lucky enough to get a part in which he had to deliver a message to Betterton, a famous Shakespearean actor in his day, but Cibber became so dreadfully flustered at having to address the great tragedian, that he made Betterton very angry. "Who is he?" the latter asked in a rage. "Master Colley," said the prompter. "Fine him!" shouted Betterton. "I can't; he has no salary," was the reply. "Then," roared Betterton, "give him ten shillings a week and deduct five."

"ROOTLE-TE TOOT HE PLAYED THE FLUTE."—Borodin, the Russian composer, was so passionately devoted to music, that he abandoned medicine and chemistry, to both of which he had been trained, in its favor. He played for hours at a stretch; on one occasion from seven in the evening till seven next morning. Persons have done as much or more as a feat of endurance for money, but Borodin never dreamt of his twelve hours, but played on out of a pure and simple love for music. He was very fond of the flute, as to which they tell this queer story about him:—Returning home one night with a friend, he fell into a cellar. His friend wondered what on earth had became of him, when all of a sudden an underground tootling revealed Borodin's fate and whereabouts. It seemed that the moment he got over the shock of his fall, Borodin had been more anxious for his beloved flute than for himself; and the notes his friend heard were the result of his playing to find out whether or not the flute were injured.

NEVER DESPAIR

BY S. W.

Never a day so dark the sun
Doth not upon it rise;
Never a night when, though unseen,
No stars are in the skies;

Never a path so hard to tread
That Courage needs to fear;
Never a hill so high that Hope
Must cease to persevere;

Never a stream that must be crossed
Too deep for Faith and strong;
Never a soul too filled with woe
To raise one thankful song.

Only bear onward steadfastly,
Only aye look above;
Only, when things are at the worst,
Keep Faith and Hope and Love:

And every cloud shall break in light,
And every trial cease,
And every battle win a crown,
And every sorrow peace!

A WAR WITH FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

[The following is a synopsis of the story "A War With Fate." Thirza Bright a wealthy American girl is visiting her aunts in England. She meets Tryan Cambray a young English gentleman and they are mutually attracted. Dora Valland the daughter of the Rector at Quilter's Common loves Tryan. Ellen Bardell a servant girl who bears a remarkable resemblance to Thirza Bright has been mysteriously murdered. Dora Valland when she perceives Tryan Cambray's regard for Thirza jealously intimates that he is in some way connected with Ellen Bardell's death. Tryan's father dies, and leaves his property much embarrassed. Tryan leaves Quilter's Common and goes to live at Hull where Thirza Bright subsequently sees him. There is a mysterious, rough looking man who figures in some connection both with Ellen Bardell the murdered girl and Dora Valland. Sydney Poplett or Pops a young fellow in love with Dora has been killed in a horse-race. He leaves his wealth to her making Tryan one of her trustees. Tryan is thinking of emigrating to Canada to better his fortunes. He hears the Hall, his inheritance, has been sold to someone unknown but the transfer is not yet made. Dora sends the mysterious stranger away in the ship Eldred which is reported wrecked. The stranger, however, now known as "John Martin" is rescued and falls in with Tryan. Tryan learns that Thirza has bought his old home. Once on meeting him lately she hints that Major Darncombe a friend of Tryan's is in love with her and she does not look unkindly upon him. The minor characters will be understood from their relations to those principals the above circumstances bringing the story to the present chapters.]

CHAPTER XXIII.

TRYAN CAMBRAY soon found that, in volunteering to escort the innkeeper's troublesome customer as far as the railway station, he had undertaken no easy task.

Before they reached the bend in the road, the cold fresh air began to affect the drunken man's gait; but, having once undertaken a task, Tryan was not one to give up easily, and he help on until they had got as far as the last empty villa, about half-way between the Doctor's and the station.

Here however his charge either could not or would not go any farther. Having lurched up against the gate-post of the still unfinished house, he clung to it, and neither force nor persuasion could make him relax his hold; he just had sufficient sense to hold on, mumbling and moaning unceasingly.

Tryan felt at a loss what to do. He was certain now that the man had struck his head pretty smartly in falling; he had seen enough of drunken sailors to know this was no ordinary case of intoxication. He looked up and down the lonely white road, rather savage with himself for yielding to the good-natured impulse which had got him into this fix.

His view towards the city was blocked by the other empty house, standing grim and desolate amid the surrounding snow, while the long range of low shed-like buildings, which marked the site of the railway station, alone broke the white waste in the other direction.

Tryan would have gone down and sent off one of the porters for the village constable and stretcher, but he did not like to leave the unhappy wretch alone; in a mad moment he might wander off across the fields, which would mean his being frozen to death.

In the midst of the young man's cogitations he heard the whistle of the train approaching from Hull, and took comfort. There surely would be a passenger for Quilter's Common; he would be able to send a message up to the village, or even back to the station—anything to save his leaving the half-unconscious man alone.

When the train reached the station, he watched the outer door anxiously. Yes—there was a passenger; but he had turned the other way! Ah, there was another—a woman, this one, who stood in the doorway talking for what seemed a weary time to the anxious watcher; but she moved at last, and in his direction!

He sighed with a sudden sensation of relief; he had felt so strangely helpless out there, cut off from human help, alone with a fellow-creature who was beyond reasonable control.

As the woman came nearer, it seemed to Tryan that he had seen her long plain brown coat somewhere else quite recently; and then he remembered where and when, and knew it was Dora Valland who, with weary steps and down-bent head, was coming slowly towards him.

As he shouted she looked up, and seeing his beckoning hand, came on hastily, gathering even at a distance, from the attitude of the swaying figure at the gate, that something was wrong. Then, as she drew nearer, she realized what had happened, and stopped suddenly, with an awful terror at her heart.

All the morning she had been hurrying from one end to another of the Hull quays, her mind full of one purpose only—to prevent at any cost a meeting between these two men; and, while she was striving and planning to prevent such a catastrophe in Hull, it had happened here, at Quilter's Common. For one terrible moment the landscape seemed to whirl round before her dazzled eyes; then she went forward with the rigid calmness of despair to meet what Fate had in store for her.

"Thank goodness you came out by this train!" cried Tryan, when she was within hailing distance. "Heaven alone knows what would have happened if you hadn't! I've got a poor fellow here who has been indulging too freely, and been knocked half silly into the bargain. He got into trouble up in the village, and I stupidly volunteered to see him back to Hull. And now he has gone helplessly stupid, just at the most awkward point on the road; I can do nothing whatever with him. Will you hurry on as fast as you can, and tell Wilson to get Beresford to send down the stretcher, and enough men to carry him back?"

What did it mean? Dora was wondering vaguely. Was it another reprieve? Had those two men been in each other's company all the way from the village without Tryan's finding out the secret which the other was so anxious to tell?

"You go for the stretcher," she said, bent on getting them apart. "I'll wait here with him."

"My dear girl," he exclaimed, forgetting everything but the necessity of the moment—"leave you here alone with a man in this state?"

"He is harmless," she replied, going close up to the man and looking into his face—"almost helpless, in fact. Let us try to get him round to the back of the house. I know the caretaker here; she will let him sit by her fire while the stretcher is fetched. I think he is half dazed with the cold."

"Caretaker?" echoed Tryan, glancing up at the unglazed windows. "I wish I had known there was anybody in the house. How was it she never heard us?"

"She is deaf. It is old Mrs. Williamson, the old sexton's widow. She will only be too glad to oblige me in any way she can. Come here!" she went on persuasively, laying her hands gently upon the sailor's arm. "Come—we are going to take you indoors to the fire."

It seemed as if there was some magic in her voice, for, although Tryan had reasoned with the troublesome fellow till he was tired, at the first sound of her soft tones he raised his wild shaggy head, as if to listen, and the moaning ceased for a moment.

"Come—give me your hand!" Dora continued, with a touch of gentle authority. "Don't be afraid to leave go; we won't let you fall. There—lean on us, and we will guide you."

And so they coaxed him to walk up the rough path and round the house to the back, where, in one of two rooms properly furnished, they found old Mrs. Williamson dozing in a large chair before the fire.

By signs Dora made the old woman understand that they wanted a mattress on the floor, and, when she had dragged one from the next room and placed it in front of the fire, they lowered their shaking, almost inert burden on to it.

"Are you the hangman?" he mumbled indistinctly, as Tryan leaned over him and loosened the wrappings at his throat. "She said she'd hang me if I came back."

Dora caught the first few words, and at once began to talk at her loudest to Mrs. Williamson.

"All the pillows you have!" she shouted at the old woman's ear. "His head must be kept up! You need not be afraid of leaving him with us," she said, turning to Tryan, and still speaking as loudly as she could. "You see the state he is in; in ten minutes he will be fast asleep; and he won't wake up for hours. If you will hurry on down to the station—you were going that way, weren't you?—and send me up a messenger to go for Doctor Clapper, we shall do very well."

"I don't like to leave him here alone with you," Tryan objected. But she bore his scruples down by her vehemence, taking him right out of the house as if she were really anxious to get rid of him.

When she came back to the kitchen, Mrs. Williamson was thrusting sticks into the fire to make the kettle boil.

"You look terrible bad, miss," said the old woman. "I'll get you a cup of tea this minute."

Dora nodded her appreciation of the attention, and went and stood by the writhing moaning man, with such a lost desolate look on her white face as would have wrung her father's heart if he could have seen it.

"You poor conscience-haunted wretch," she muttered, clasping and unclasping her hands, as if in the throes of some mortal agony, "I can enter into your sufferings! Merciful Heaven, how thoroughly I can enter into them! What good is your life to you?" she went on presently. "It would be a kindness to put an end to it, if one only knew how—if one only knew! Why have you come in my way again just now, at the very moment when there seemed a gleam of hope for me? If I could only put you out of sight, where you could shout and rave and shriek your wickedness aloud, and there was nobody to heed it! If I could hide you where nobody would listen——" She stopped abruptly, as if some new idea had presented itself to her. "Merciful Heaven—yes!" she muttered. "Yes!—yes!"

As if under the influence of some enthralling thought, she sprang to her feet, and then stood looking steadily at the prostrate man.

"Yes," she murmured presently—"yes, it is possible! I am certain it is possible—with care! And it would not be cruel—it would be almost justifiable—quite justifiable. Let me think. Let me be careful to leave no chance of failure!"

* * * * * *

It was dark by the time Doctor Clapper reached the villa in the station road. He had taken the precaution to bring a lantern with him, and so was able to pick his way over the rough garden path without making any noise.

The message he had received was rather vague, and, beyond the fact that Miss Valland wanted him at Porter's second empty villa, he knew nothing. When he reached the back of the house, he waited a moment at the uncurtained kitchen window, impressed by the dramatic aspect of the scene inside.

The drunken man was lying on his back, the ruddy light from the fire falling upon his swarthy face and black shaggy beard and hair. He had ceased from tossing about now, but his right hand, tightly clenched, lay on his broad chest. His whole appearance was less suggestive of rest than suppressed ferocity.

Mrs. Williamson had drawn her large old-fashioned wooden chair near his head, and sat placidly knitting quickly and mechanically, though she was more than half asleep. Miss Valland, behind them, was pacing up and down, from the white wooden table in the window to the opposite side of the room and back again.

There was a small lamp on the table, and each time as she came towards it, her rigid dead-white face and flaxen hair emerged from the dense shadows in a manner which set the genial unimaginative Doctor's blood creeping.

What was it that was so strange about her? he wondered, watching the advancing face as it approached the window for the third or fourth time.

Why should her beautiful features bear that look of suppressed terror. Why should there be about her such an air of horror and dread, of inflexible determination to hold her fear in check though unable to conquer it?

Having asked himself the question two or three times, and finding himself farther off from a reply than ever, he suddenly lost patience with his own folly, strode forward, and rapped smartly upon the door, wondering what idiotic folly possessed him to-night.

Miss Valland opened the door to him herself, and, singing to him to tread softly, stood aside for him to enter.

"I'm afraid you will have had your tramp through the snow for nothing, after all," she said quietly. "The patient is asleep, poor fellow, and, I fancy, likely to sleep for some time."

"What's wrong with him?" asked the Doctor, kneeling by the mattress and leaning over to look at the sleeping man's face. "Oh, drink to begin with!" he said shortly. "Is it anything worse? Is he hurt anywhere?"

"It is one of the saddest cases I have ever had anything to do with," she replied; "and I'm afraid we have scarcely got to the worst of it yet. This poor fellow—John Martin his name is—was the sweetheart of that unhappy girl who was murdered in the quarry last summer. He was at the other side of the world when the dreadful affair happened; and when he came home and heard about it he took to drinking madly; for two months straight off he was never sober."

"Fool, fool," ejaculated the doctor, shaking his head, as he rose to his feet—"he'll drink himself cracked if he don't look out!"

"I'm afraid he has done that already," Miss Valland returned pitifully, seating herself by the table at a sign from the Doctor; "and that is really why I sent for you to see him. He is utterly alone in the world, and I don't think he is responsible for his actions. Constantly dwelling on his sweetheart's death, together with the drink, has destroyed his reason altogether. Sometimes he imagines it was he who killed her, and he will go through the whole tragedy, down to the most ghastly details, until he would almost persuade you of the truth of his story. I have heard him myself; he made my flesh creep!"

"An extraordinary hallucination!" muttered the Doctor, noticing how the mere memory of the description set her trembling. "I suppose there is no doubt as to its being an hallucination—I mean, he really was abroad when the murder was committed?"

"Oh, yes—he was in China! I was talking to his captain—the captain he was with at the time—only this morning," she answered, still trembling from the horror of that memory.

"Ah, well, that settles it, of course!" declared the Doctor decisively. "I have heard of a rather similar case."

"It is terrible to hear him dwell upon it," she went on tremulously; "but the worst part of it is that every now and again he takes it into his head that the people he happens to be with at the time are going to hand him over to the police, and he threatens them. That is what I am afraid of—that he will do somebody an injury, and I think he ought to be placed under restraint."

"I see," said the Doctor gravely.

"He has not a creature in the world to look after him," she continued; "he has already injured two sailors on board his ship, and he got into trouble up at The Wheatsheif to-day; you see he can't keep away from the place. I live in constant fear and trembling that there will be another murder if he is not put safely away somewhere. You see it is just one of those cases which need prompt measures. A day's delay, and he may do some mischief which can never be repaired."

"Yes—I understand that; but there is likely to be some little difficulty with the people at the asylum. Still that will have to be got over if he is a dangerous lunatic."

She covered her eyes with her hands so suddenly that the Doctor turned to look at her, under the impression that for the first time since he had known her—and they had met more than once under the most heartrending conditions—she was going to cry. She was conscious of his movement of surprise, and explained.

"It is the lamp hurts my eyes," she said. "I am feeling very much shaken to-night; I was up the night before last with little Nancy Bushell—until the end; and poor Sidney Poplett's death had unnerved me very much. Of course you have heard of his splendid generosity to me? I am not likely to have much use for the money myself, but it will enable me to do a great deal of good; and here is a case to begin with."

She pointed to the sleeping man; and the Doctor glanced at him and then inquiringly at her.

"You spoke of the difficulty with the

asylum people," she went on—"you mean because he is a stranger and a pauper?"

"Yes—they make a trouble of taking in paupers unless they are sure they belong to the county."

"And how is it with paid patients?"

"Oh, that is another sort of thing altogether!"

"Very well, then, I will become responsible for three months' board and lodging for this unfortunate creature. By then perhaps they will have found out where he really belongs to, any rate, he can go in at first as a paid patient."

"That is very generous of you, Miss Valland!"

She raised her eyes and looked at him so queerly that for a moment he had a return of the sensation he had experienced when watching her through the window.

"Generous!" she echoed mockingly. "Don't be too ready to think well of my motive, Doctor Clapper. How do I know that this man won't do me some grievous harm if he is allowed to continue at large? Why not to me as well as another?"

"That is true enough certainly," returned the easy-going Doctor, with an uncomfortable feeling which he often recalled in after days; "still I don't think that is your motive. However, we will say nothing more about it. I know from of old that you really charitable people dislike nothing so much as talking about your good deeds. Now for the business part of this matter! Let us be as quick as we will, we can't get this poor fellow moved until to-morrow afternoon. I must get another medical man to sign the certificate, and the asylum van must be telegraphed for. What are you going to do with the patient in the meantime?"

"I will stay with him."

"You?" He stood up and looked at her with genuine admiration. "Well, upon my word, Miss Valland, I think you have more absolute courage than any woman I know!"

"No—it is not such a foolhardy offer as it seems," she explained hurriedly; "it is only that he knows me, and I have a certain amount of influence over him. I would rather stay and see the last of him."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll send my man down to stay the night; you can let him doze in the next room, and he will be handy in case you want him. When the patient wakes up, the first thing he will call for will be drink. I will send a soothing draught, to be taken in a tumbler of water; that will keep him quiet until midday; and by then I and another medico will be here to examine him and sign the necessary papers. I will send Perry down about ten."

"One thing, Doctor Clapper," she said later, when all the details had been thoroughly gone into—"don't send a lot of inquisitive prying people down here. Will you keep the whole affair as secret as the grave until it is all over? I can imagine the poor fellow alone, but not with a lot of chattering busybodies coming and going. Send word up to Ursula that I am nursing, and she will understand not to expect me home."

"I hope you won't knock yourself up over this job," said the Doctor gravely, as he held her hand at parting. "This devotion to good works is well enough in its way, but you must not overtax your strength."

"I will rest for a week when this affair is safely over," she assured him, "and you shall doctor me as much as you like. Good-night! Don't forget to tell Perry that he is not to say a word to a soul about where he is coming."

And she went back to her night-long watch by the side of the sleeping man, with the look of inflexible will struggling with some mysterious terror impressed more strongly than ever upon her mask-like face.

"Shall I carry it through?" was her one question now. "Shall I carry it through, or will some trifling accident upset everything at the last moment?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

LUNCHEON was over at Dale Cottage, and the ladies were loitering about the drawing room doing nothing in particular. It was one of those breathing-spaces before the taking up of a fresh occupation which even Miss Gunter showed no desire to cut short. Just now she was devoting the few minutes of pleasant idling to complaining about the temperature of the room.

The Dale Cottage drawing room underwent its weekly "turning out" on Saturday morning; to-day, Merritt having been behindhand with her work from the start, the fire had not burned up yet, and the room, to use Miss Gunter's description, was "like an ice well!" Miss Gunter hated a dull fire, and she sank down upon her knees in her energetic fashion and began to coax the sulky coal and wood into a more genial state.

Miss Carry was at the window, gazing mournfully at the snow on the lawns and hedges, and Thir was at the piano, with Sheelah under one arm, picking out the air of a new song and humming it sotto voce.

The piano was near the window; and presently, hearing Miss Carry utter an exclamation of surprise, Thir swung herself round on the music-stool, just in time to see Major Darncombe replacing his hat as he went on past the house. Acting on the impulse of the moment, she sprang from her seat and beckoned to him before he was out of sight; then, heedless of Miss Carry's horrified cry of, "Oh, Thir, how could you?" she ran out of the room and opened the house door to him herself.

"I'm in for it now, Major Darncombe!" she said, laughing quietly at him as he came up the path. "I've just shocked that dainty little aunt of mine beyond everything by calling you in. I guess I shall get a mile-long lecture on propriety as soon as you've gone!"

"It was awfully good of you!" he replied, smiling at her as if he found her very pleasant to look at. "Tell me what I can do to save you from the threatened lecture."

"Oh, I judge that'll have to come anyhow!" she said, leading the way towards the drawing-room.

As the Major followed, he murmured—

"I judge it'll find you prepared to take your own part, anyhow, Miss Thir!"

The girl laughed merrily at his cool reproduction of her little Americanisms.

For some reason best known to herself, Miss Gunter received Major Darncombe in her most cordial manner—not that she was habitually stiff or austere towards her visitors, but there were gradations of warmth in her bearing—and Thir knew by certains signs that her aunt was willing to let Major Darncombe see that she was glad to know him.

"I was so anxious to come in," he said presently, "and yet I hardly liked to venture without a little encouragement."

"Thir must surely have guessed at your state of mind," observed Miss Carry, whose cheeks had not yet cooled. "That might help to account for her extraordinary conduct."

The Major glanced at Thir with a gleam of fun in his eyes.

"Miss Thir must be very quick at guessing, though I did not know my anxiety was so palpable as all that! The fact is I have been up to the Rectory again, to learn Miss Valland's wishes about Monday."

"Monday?"

"Yes—the funeral, you know. I saw Mr. Valland at Mrs. Poplett's yesterday, but he said he would rather I communicated personally with Miss Valland. So I came over to know if it was her intention to be present. But she is not at home; and, what is worse, the servant could not tell me where to find her; all she knew was that Miss Valland was out nursing somewhere in the village—had been out all night long. It is rather awkward, because time is so short. I went to ask Mrs. Greenbury if she could help me, but she knew nothing, and then I wondered if you could assist me."

Miss Gunter shook her head, and replied—

"I did not know there was any serious sickness in the village just now. It must be something new. This weather keeps us so much indoors that we hear nothing. How is Mrs. Poplett? I hardly ever spoke to the poor boy, but I hear everybody saying how thoroughly likeable he was. His mother must be almost broken down."

"Yes, poor soul, it is a terrible time for her. It will be a good thing when Monday is over."

"Ah, I'll go and find out if the servants know anything about Miss Valland's whereabouts!" said Miss Gunter. "If we found out where the sickness is, it might be a guide for you."

The Major thanked her as he opened the door for her, and then returned to the brightening fire and warmed his hands.

"Every time I see Mrs. Poplett I feel like a murderer," he said quietly. "She is goodness itself to me, and yet——"

He paused and sighed heavily.

"I don't think you should feel like that about it," observed Miss Carry, drawing a little nearer to him; "nobody could blame you in the slightest degree for what has happened."

"No—nobody does that, Miss Carry!" Thir liked his abbreviation of her aunt's name; he was the only person beside herself who shortened it. "Nobody has hinted at such a thing; even in the midst of her own grief, Mrs. Poplett tries to comfort me. But I can't help feeling it, you know. It is such a satisfaction to us all to know that the poor soul has Mr. Valland to fall back on. It shows how little we know about anything. Until this happened we were all inclined to be rather savage, on poor Pop's account, about this marriage; now it is a great comfort to know she has such a thoroughly good fellow to lean upon in her trouble. I don't think Miss Valland is much like her father, is she? I shouldn't think he could hurt a worm."

"I don't think Dora is cruel, if you mean that," said Miss Carry, looking at him inquiringly.

"Well, I don't know, Miss Carry. Mrs. Poplett told me she had never even sent a message of sympathy by her father. It was natural enough she shouldn't like the idea of his engagement, but to show resentment at such a time as this savors of implacability!"

"But she is always so good and so busy in the parish," urged Miss Carry; "don't you think she may have forgotten the actual formality?"

"I think you are the kindest-hearted little woman I have ever met in my life!" he exclaimed warmly; and Thir joined in with an enthusiastic assent.

"Aunt Carry simply can't run anybody down!" she declared. "I've heard her set out to do it once or twice in a sort of a half-hearted style, but she always fetches up at the finish with an excuse for them. It's a kind of mild constitutional ailment, Major Darncombe; she can't help it. You must make allowances for her."

"It is an ailment that we could stand a good deal of," he declared. "For my part, I wish it was more general. Can't you come and live near, and set the fashion among the ladies of the —th, Miss Carry?"

"I set a fashion?" she echoed, smiling.

"And why not?" asked Thir. "You're quite good-looking enough, if that has anything to do with it." She crossed over to her aunt and began to finger Miss Carry's pretty fair hair, loosening it slightly at the temples and pushing the soft waves a little forward over the brow. "I'm sure, if you would only let me cut you a fringe and wear a big Gainborough hat, you would be the prettiest woman in the parish!"

"Thir, I really will not allow it!" cried Miss Carry, putting up her hands to her head in sheer desperation. "What do you think Major Darncombe will think of the pair of us? Go away and tease Sheelah and the kittens!"

"Major Darncombe thinks we are both very nice young women," replied Thir, laughing across at him, "and he wishes very much that we would ask him to take off his big coat and stay to tea."

"He wishes very much that he could, Miss Thir," returned the Major, smiling as if he appreciated the whole business very thoroughly; "but he can't spare the time. You see I must see Miss Valland somehow before I go back. I suppose I must turn out and institute a house-to-house inquiry if everything else fails."

"Perhaps Aunt Polly will find out where she is for you," said Thir.

But, when Miss Gunter came back, it appeared that she knew nothing. Merritt had even been in next door to ask Mrs. Wellcome if she had heard of any serious illness in the village, and, though Mrs. Wellcome generally knew everything, she knew nothing concerning the whereabouts of Miss Valland.

The Major rose and began to button up his coat with the air of a man being driven against his will.

"Then there is nothing for it," he said, with a rueful glance out of the window, "but the house-to-house visitation."

"It will be a very wearisome undertaking for a stranger," observed Miss Gunter feelingly.

"I think I will come and help you!" exclaimed Thir, with a sudden inspiration. "You won't know which are the best places to go to, Aunt Carry, you come too! It won't hurt you, for you haven't got the fag-end of a fit of neuralgia hanging about you as Aunt Polly has!"

Miss Carry looked rather embarrassed.

"If Major Darncombe thinks we should be of any use," she murmured.

"The greatest use, Miss Carry! Only the weather is so abominable for ladies ——"

"Not at all!" declared Thir. "A sharp walk will do us all the good in the world! Come along, Aunt Carry! We won't keep you many minutes, Major Darncombe."

And Thir hurried her younger aunt out of the room and upstairs.

Although a heated discussion ensued on the subject of Miss Carry's adornment, it was astonishing how soon they were down again. Of course Thir conquered in the end, and brought her aunt down, looking flushed but resplendent in the wonderful bonnet with plumes which she had made up her mind not to wear again until it was sobered down with a superstructure of black lace.

Miss Gunter looked surprised at her sister's splendor, and, guessing it was Thir's doing, wondered what fancy possessed the child.

She would have wondered still more if she had seen "the child's" conduct throughout that long expedition.

It was Thir who always went into the various houses to make inquiries, and those inquiries took sometimes a surprisingly long time. In the meantime the Major and Miss Carry paced smartly up and down outside, awaiting Thir's return with a patience which was exemplary. But in spite of Thir's persevering inquiries they seemed to get no nearer to the end they had in view.

Nobody had seen Miss Valland since early the previous day, and nobody knew of any illness in the village that was likely to keep the Rector's daughter out all night. There was the usual case of rheumatism among the villagers, and one or two of bronchitis; but none of these were serious enough to demand night-long watching.

At last, when this popping into and out of cottages had gone on for an hour or more, and Thir was beginning to feel baffled, it occurred to Miss Carry that perhaps Doctor Clapper might be able to give them some information.

"In a case of serious sickness she would be sure to send for him," she said; "he is almost bound to know where she is."

"Of course!" exclaimed Thir. "How stupid of us not to have thought of that before!"

And so they started off for the other end of the village again, past Dale Cottage, towards the Doctor's new villa at the bend of the road.

But here they met with no better success than elsewhere. The Doctor was out, and Miss Nancy had heard of no new case. She thought perhaps that Perry might know more about it than she did, though, for she had been out all last evening.

But, when Perry was summoned from the stables, he had apparently no more information to give them on the matter in hand than all the rest of the world. He had not heard of any fresh case among the village folk, and he did not think there could be one without his hearing of it.

Once in the open air again, the three patient inquirers paused, looking up and down the road in a hopeless manner—up towards the village, which they had already exhausted as a field for inquiry, and down past the two empty villas towards the railway station, which seemed to hold out very little promise of reward for pushing their inquiries in that direction.

"Well, I suppose there is nothing for it but to own myself beaten, and go back no wiser than I came," said Major Darncombe at last, in a tone of vexation. "I don't like to be done, but, since Miss Valland seems to have disappeared by magic, it is useless going on any longer."

"It is the most surprising thing I ever heard of," Thir remarked; and Miss Carry agreed, murmuring a hope that nothing dreadful had happened to the missing girl.

"I wonder what that means!" exclaimed Thir abruptly.

She had been watching a dark, square, ungainly-looking vehicle coming slowly along the white distant road past the railway station, and her exclamation of surprise had been caused by its stoppage in front of one of the two empty houses.

"What a queer looking affair, isn't it? There's a man getting down. And he's going into the house! And look—there's another! Is it a furniture van, do you think? Is that house let at last?"

"One can hardly see at this distance," replied Major Darncombe; "but I don't think it is a furniture van. It is not large enough."

"It can't be a piano cart, surely!" cried Thir. "There is no glass in the windows yet. They would never put a piano into an unfinished house in such weather as this."

"No—I don't think it is a 'piano cart' either," observed the Major. He was thinking that he did know one type of vehicle which closely resembled that standing in front of the distant empty house.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A LAST PRAYER.

BY M. E.

When the green world sang her gladdest tune
And the boughs were white with May,
When the rivulets coursed with a merry rune
And the larks sang loud all day,
When the scent of the roses was in the air
And the sky was blue above,
When my heart and the world were free from care,
Then I only prayed for Love.

Now the wintry snow flakes fill the air,
And my hopes at last are dead;
The woods make moan and the fields are bare,
To summer the birds have fled;
But the prayer I make shall answered be
In the calm of the Great Release,
For my poor heart prays unceasingly
For nothing but Peace, sweet Peace!

The Half-Burnt Letter.

BY C. N. C.

A FIRE at a theatre near by had filled the accident ward of St. X's Hospital. Many patients were crushed and bruised, besides being severely burnt, the most serious case being that of a tall, slight, young man, a gentleman to judge by his dress, who it was said had done more than anyone else to help his companions in misfortune, till he received a blow from a falling beam that prostrated him and rendered him insensible.

Philip Bryant, the house surgeon, had been actively engaged with these sufferers for some hours, and now at the last thoroughly exhausted, had contrived to snatch a few minutes in which to make out his notes and take the food and rest he so much required. He was writing busily when a low knock came at the door of his room, and one of the nurses entered carrying a small basket in her hand.

"I thought I had better bring these things to you, sir," she said, laying a packet on the table. "They belong to the patient with the wound on his head. Will you look over them. They may afford some clue to his name or where he lives."

"I will attend to them in a moment, Sister Dorcas," Mr. Bryant replied, without raising his eyes from his work. "Is there any change since I saw him?"

The nurse made her report and left the room. Bryant wrote on till he came to the end of the sheet; then he read over carefully what he had written, made one or two corrections, and closed the book. He glanced somewhat regretfully at the easy-chair in the corner.

"I must look over those things first," he muttered as he pulled the little collection of charred trifles towards him. "Then I shall be able to take my nap with a clear conscience."

The collection was commonplace enough. It consisted of the broken fragments of a meerschaum pipe, silver-mounted; a pocket book singed in places, and drenched with water; a purse, fairly well filled, and a partially consumed cardboard case, holding photographs of a young man in uniform—presumably the patient himself.

The initials E. G. were engraved on the pipe, and on the flap of the purse. Opening the pocket-book carefully, Bryant took from it half-a-dozen visiting cards that crumbled under his touch, and a half-burnt letter.

He laid these aside and began to piece out the photograph from the relics of the dozen the case had recently contained. In a short time he had managed to construct a portrait that afforded him a very good idea of what the injured man had been like a few hours before. The change was startling. Those bright, keen eyes were dull and spiritless now, the complexion scarred and seamed with cracks, the fair hair singed and rough. Only the forehead and nose bore any resemblance to that of the young soldier so sorely stricken.

"An Indian officer, I should say," Bryant murmured as he contemplated his handiwork. "It ought to be comparatively easy to find out who he is. Some one will know to what regiment the uniform belongs, though I do not. Possibly the photographer can tell me—the number is legible, luckily. Who is it? Oh, I see—I will send over in the morning."

"There is only the letter to examine now," he resumed, as he took up the pocket book. "I hardly like to do it, but I suppose I must. Not that I shall get much information from it, for the envelope and half the paper have been burnt away."

He unfolded the sheet as he spoke and gazed at it with a perplexed expression of countenance. Surely the writing was familiar. Or was it his fancy? No, he knew every stroke and turn. That Elsie—his Elsie—had traced those characters, he could affirm unhesitatingly. He would read no further. He desired to pry into no one's secrets—least of all into hers.

Still, he must look at the signature, if only to make sure. Uncertainty would be torture. Feverishly he turned the page to see if the flames had spared the conclusion, and read the word—"At last, my dearest.

"Yours for ever and aye,
"ELSIE BRAYBROOKE."

He strove to refold the letter and restore it to its hiding-place, but the temptation to know more was too strong. Elsie's handwriting drew him like a magnet. Once, he resolutely withdrew his eyes from the paper, but the next moment they were greedily devouring every syllable.

It was a heavy blow. The letter—what there was of it—breathed affection, tenderness, trust in every line. And he had believed she felt all these for himself. Poor fool—how egregiously he had been deceived.

"We have waited such a weary time," Elsie wrote. "I can hardly realise that I am free to pour out to you all that is in my heart. I am so happy, dear. I keep repeating to myself, that I love you, and you only. As to——"

"As to Philip, what did I ever care for him?" was how the unhappy reader finished the sentence, as with trembling fingers he turned the last page.

"I shall count the days till you come for me, my own," were the next words his eyes lighted upon. "I wonder when and where you will get this. Edward——"

"Edward?" and the purse and pocket book were marked "E. G." Bryant knew now who his rival was. He could remember hearing at one time much about a certain Edward Gardiner, a captain in Colonel Braybrooke's regiment, and cousin to Elsie's stepmother. Doubtless the young man had been thrown designedly into Elsie's society, and had made the most of his opportunities. Among new scenes the girl had forgotten her former lover—it was the old story.

Bryant lay back in his chair, a prey to very bitter reflections. His life from boyhood had been one of toil and endeavor—Elsie's love, its sole gleam of brightness. His thoughts flew back to the time when he and his sister Lina had been taken by their mother to the Hollies to play with little Elsie Braybrooke, who lived there with her aunt during her father's absence in India.

Elsie had remained there after her school-days were over (for Colonel Braybrooke, being a widower, could not conveniently have his daughter with him), and had grown up a charming and most amiable girl.

Years went by. The boy and girl who had played together grew to be lovers, and though they had no immediate prospect of marriage were happy enough till Colonel Braybrooke, having taken unto himself a second wife, came over to England to fetch his daughter.

When he was told of the attachment she had formed, he had expressed the greatest indignation at what he termed his sister's culpable neglect of her niece's interests. He could find nothing against Philip but lack of means, but that was an insuperable barrier in his eyes. So he dissolved the engagement, forbade all correspondence, and carried Elsie off to India, where, he asserted, he would speedily find her a suitable husband.

One brief interview was all he allowed to the lovers. Bryant could still call up the vision of Elsie's tear-stained face as she clasped her arms round his neck and pressed a long farewell kiss on his lips. He could still hear her sweet voice as she reiterated her promise never to forget him; to love him always; to be his till death and after.

They had parted, and old Miss Braybrooke dying shortly afterwards, had for nearly five years heard nothing of each other but what could be learned from the newspapers. It was next to impossible that Bryant would, in any reasonable time, make an income large enough to satisfy Colonel Braybrooke's requirements, but he worked on hopefully, prayerfully, in perfect faith that his devotion would in the end win its reward.

And at last fortune favored him. Within the last few months a distant cousin of his had died and left him all he possessed: a small estate near Sevenoaks, and an income more than sufficient to enable him to live in comfort and even luxury. One condition was attached to the bequest, that he should take his cousin's name.

A condition he accepted, though reluctantly, and on entering St. X's Hospital had signed himself Philip Bryant, laying aside the name of Huntley by which he had been known to Miss Braybrooke. He ought to have found means to acquaint her with the change, but had delayed doing so, thinking it would be time enough when he had acquired possession of the property and could claim her as his wife.

He had no intention of giving up his profession, to which he was devoted, and in which he was already pre-eminently skilful, and he would now be able to take a standing at once for which he might have had to wait through years of toil.

The great clock striking the hour at which Bryant paid his nightly visit to the ward, roused him from dwelling on the past, and he rose mechanically and commenced his usual round. On his way up the ward he paused at Gardiner's bedside. The patient had recovered consciousness so far as to be able to mutter a few incoherent words, but his injuries were so severe, there was little hope of his recovery.

As Bryant gazed at him, humanity, the natural desire to help a fellow-creature in such sore straits, the medical instinct in short, prompted him to do his utmost to restore the man to health—whilst jealousy stayed his hand and bade him remember that it was well his rival should perish—he deserved his fate.

Bryant took a seat by the sick man's couch and shaded his eyes with his hand. So this was Elsie's lover, he mused; her "dearest for ever and aye," and it had fallen to his, Bryant's lot to bring him back to life. Should he accept the charge, or should he by a little inattention—— Bryant shivered. "God help me," he moaned, as he rose and beckoned to the nurse. "Am I then a murderer?"

His hand may have shaken a little as he examined the captain's wound, but if so, it was the sole evidence of the struggle going on within. His face was impenetrable as he issued the most minute directions for the patient's treatment. That brief prayer was granted. Before he left the ward he had registered a vow to do his duty to the last. Elsie should have her lover, if any effort of his could save him for her.

For days a battle went on between life and death. Bryant gave up all his spare time to the case, and indeed played the part of nurse to Captain Gardiner as well as that of doctor. He failed to discover any friends of the young officer's, but believing him to be able to afford the expense, had him removed to a private room and supplied with every comfort.

Night after night he passed at Gardiner's beside, taking neither rest or sleep till students, doctors and nurses were lost in wonder. The case was an interesting one, they owned, but there was nothing in it, as it seemed to them, to call for such excessive devotion.

To nurse an unconscious man was comparatively easy, but when sense returned and the patient's strength increased, Bryan was fain to acknowledge that the task he had set himself was no light one. By enjoining complete silence, he managed for a time to check many little confidences and grateful speeches on the part of the sick man, though now and then words would fall from him that gave Bryan so sharp a pang, that he was almost forced in self-defence to plead indisposition and hand over the case to a colleague.

His life in India was the theme the Captain loved most to dwell upon, and to that it was impossible to listen. And when one day—both hands being still useless—Gardiner made an urgent appeal to his doctor to write a few lines for him to a friend out there, Bryant's self-control gave way, and in an abrupt tone that filled Sister Dorcas with dismay, declared he could not and would not do it, and then left the room.

Sister Dorcas wrote that letter, and when it was finished, laid it in its envelope on the surgeon's table to be sent to the post with his own despatches—thus unwittingly supplying him with the very information he was longing for: Colonel Braybrooke's address.

He was sorely tempted to write to Elsie, and tell her he knew of her treachery, but altered his mind as he tried to frame the sentence, and laid his pen aside.

It was a great relief when at length Captain Gardiner was strong enough to quit the hospital; so much so, that he feared the young man would read it in his eyes, and (for he was very plain-spoken) seek to know the reason. He felt it was churlish to choke off the young fellow's thanks; to refuse further intercourse with him; but no other course was possible though he acknowledged to himself that under other circumstances, a strong friendship might have existed between himself and his patient; there was so much in the man's character calling for admiration.

The pocket book and other trifles had remained in Bryant's possession since the night of the fire, and now, on this last morning, must be delivered to their owner. He had intended to have sent them in by another hand, but a messenger failing him at the moment, had to take them himself.

Gardiner loosened the string that bound the packet and glanced at the photograph, as he did so making some half-laughing allusion to the loss of his good looks—looks which he was assured would return. Then he pressed the remnant of the letter to his lips and sighed. Suddenly an idea seemed to strike him and he exclaimed:

"There is a question I want to ask you, doctor. I wonder I never thought of it before. Do you——" but ere he could proceed further, Bryant had turned round as if in answer to some call from without and disappeared. And as he did not return before Gardiner left the hospital, the sentence was never finished, and the two parted without either hand-shake or farewell.

The patient once gone, Bryant strove to dismiss the whole affair from his mind, and seek in hard work a refuge from bitter thought. He would fain have thrown up his appointment and left the country, but his only sister was dependent on him, and until the legacy was paid, he had not the means to support her comfortably without drawing his pay.

She would have gone with him and cheerfully endured any hardship, but he would not accept the sacrifice. Her sympathy was a great comfort to him in his trial, though at times Lina gave him an unconscious stab by her wholesale condemnation of Elsie's conduct. Elsie had behaved very badly, doubtless, but her old lover could not hear her blamed, there must be some excuse for her.

Captain Gardiner, as it proved, was not one to let himself fade from his doctor's memory. The very first day his fingers could grasp a pen, he wrote to Philip to report progress, and to reproach him—though good-naturedly—for having run away without giving him any opportunity of expressing his full gratitude for the unvarying kindness shown to him. Receiving no reply, he wrote again, urging Bryant to call upon him, adding that he was forbidden the exertion, or he would have paid a visit to the hospital before this, but that the first time he took a drive he should look in.

Bryant could save his rival's life, but to give him his hand in friendship was out of his power. His reply was, to say the truth, very surly. "Pray do not thank me," he wrote. "I have done nothing to deserve it. I am paid to attend the patients here: it is my duty. And do not call on me, I beg of you. I have no wish to receive visitors."

A few months later Bryant, being in possession of his property, settled his sister in the house at Sevenoaks with an old lady to bear her company, and began to make preparations for a voyage to the Antipodes.

One day, about a fortnight before his intended departure, he ran down to spend a few hours with Lina, when in the course of conversation she alluded to a note she had lately received.

"It is from Mr. Thompson," she added, "old Miss Braybrooke's solicitor. I used often to meet him at the Hollies when the old lady was alive, and he has never lost sight of me. He says a friend of his is seeking information he believes I can supply, and asks me to let him call here. He adds that he encloses the gentleman's card, but I cannot find it. I could not refuse Mr. Thompson's request, so I appointed this afternoon; thinking you would be here and help me to receive my visitor. But what can he want with me?"

"I cannot enlighten you, Lina," her brother replied carelessly, "but you will know very soon, for I hear a ring at the door now."

The servant handed a card to Miss Huntley as she ushered in the stranger. Lina glanced at it and blushed a deep crimson. Seeing her agitation, Philip looked up with some curiosity, and his eyes met those of Captain Gardiner.

"Doctor," the young man exclaimed, with such evident gratification in his tone that Lina's heart warmed to him in spite of her prejudice, "what a happy chance this is. I am glad to meet you again."

He was wonderfully improved since

Bryant had seen him last, and was quite as handsome now, if not so radiant, as when his photograph had been taken. He held out his hand as he spoke, but the other would not see it, and a grave inclination of the head was all the greeting the doctor vouchsafed to his former patient.

The Captain colored with vexation, but remembering he was in a lady's presence, controlled himself. Turning to Lina, he said quietly—

"Miss Huntley, I am much indebted to you for so kindly allowing me to call upon you. But the matter I have to discuss with you is of a private nature, and—" he looked towards Bryant and hesitated.

"Pray speak freely," Miss Huntley rejoined politely, as she offered him a seat, "I have no secrets from my brother. In what way can I serve you, Captain Gardiner?"

"Is Dr. Bryant your brother?" Captain Gardiner asked in a tone of surprise. "How very strange. You have more than one, then, for I am now in search of a Mr. Huntley, who, I am informed, is a brother of yours. Can you give me his address? Mr. Thompson would have written to you for it, but I preferred to see you myself, as I have much to say that will interest you."

"My brother took the name of Bryant more than a year ago, by the request of a deceased relative," pursued Lina. "I wonder you did not hear that at the hospital. He was so much with you."

"Yes—and if I had had my wits about me, might have found my man long ago," said the Captain ruefully. "Ah, I begin to understand one or two little things that have perplexed me very much. "Doctor," he went on, taking a letter-case from his pocket, "the matter is simply this: Miss Braybrooke—we are connections, as you may have heard—Elsie Braybrooke, not knowing where to find you, commissioned me, when I was in England, to seek you out and deliver to you a most important letter.

"Before I could make inquiries as to your whereabouts, I was struck down as you know. It is only within the last few weeks that I have been able to move in the matter. The letter, unfortunately, has been mutilated, though by no fault of mine. But such as it is, I will give it to you, and trust to your goodness to excuse the delay. Here it is."

Philip's face was very pale as he took it from the Captain's hand, and once more read the words that had given him such bitter pain. He tried to speak, but could not command his voice. Lina came to his assistance, though she was too much affected for her words to be very coherent.

"What must you think of me, Gardiner," he said at length, recovering himself with a strong effort. "I have in truth been a jealous fool. I ought to have known my sweet Elsie better than to have doubted her. But the address of the letter was gone as you see, and what could I think but that it belonged to you. Can you ever pardon my rudeness to you?"

"It needs no excuse, my dear fellow," cried Gardiner heartily. "I owe my life to you, remember. Now I see why it was you could not make a friend to me. You thought I had supplanted you—you had every reason to think so. You are a wonderful man, Bryant. In your place I should have wrung my patient's neck."

"Do not make a joke of it," Bryant said gravely. "Rather let us return thanks to God for having given me strength to resist temptation, but for pity's sake, enlighten me. What causes Miss Braybrooke to write as she does here?"

"As you may suppose," replied Gardiner, "our Colonel tried his utmost to make a grand match for his daughter, and would have given her gladly to any rich fellow in the regiment—my unworthy self among the number," he added with a half laugh.

"But Elsie stuck to you through thick and thin, and wouldn't look at any of us. She said plainly she was engaged, and let her father bluster. And when the English papers reported that Mr. Huntley had come into a handsome property, he withdrew his objections and gave Elsie permission to tell you so. If you would have only allowed me to talk about India when I was in hospital, the matter might have been cleared up last year. But let that rest. Will you take my hand now, Bryant? I can't deny that I had a fancy for Elsie, but you have nothing to fear from me."

"If you owe your life to me, I owe my happiness to you, so we are quits," said Bryant gratefully, as he pressed the young man's hand. "Believe me, I shall value your friendship very highly. It is more than I deserve. But now I must ask you to excuse me for a few minutes while I write a line by the Indian mail. There will be just time to catch the post if I begin at once, and meanwhile my sister will take care of you."

* * * * * *

The very next steamer took Philip Bryand to Calcutta, where his bride was waiting to receive him. His troubles were at an end. But happy as he is in his wife's love a shade of sadness always comes into his eyes if any chance circumstance recalls to his mind that half-burnt letter. Captain Gardiner and himself are close friends—and very soon, so Elsie says, will be brothers-in-law.

ROMANCES IN REAL LIFE.

"Woman is the mystery"—especially woman as she is represented in other men's wives. One does not need to have a very large circle of acquaintances to realise this; for there is something mysterious about the better-halves of thousands of men—something that you can rarely fathom.

A singular case in point created a great deal of surmise. Three or four years ago a merchant returned home from a visit to the West of England with a young lady whom he introduced as his wife, and who, as a matter of fact, was such.

A week later she went away, and from that day until nearly two years afterwards nobody who had met her heard a word about her. The merchant was not a stickler for the conventionalities of life, and he made it pretty plainly understood that inquiries about his wife were distasteful to him.

There was, as may be supposed, much gossip in consequence. The fact is, however, that the bride came almost straight away from the fields, she being the daughter of an agricultural laborer whom the merchant had fallen in love with at first sight.

Shortly after she reached her new home she committed a terrible breach of etiquette at the dinner table. Personally, her husband did not mind this at all; but he saw that similar social sins would bring no end of ridicule on his wife, and eventually he proposed that she should go away to be educated—a proposal to which she agreed. Hence her absence from home so long.

Very peculiar are the domestic relations of a gentleman who, while on a visit to some part of Africa a few years ago, married a native princess. He was soon obliged to return to England, but she felt constrained to stop where she was, because by leaving the land of her birth she would thereby lose her succession to the throne; and, though the husband spends about eight months out of every year in England, his wife has never yet left her native soil.

Not very long back a North-country professional gentleman married a young and charming typist. It was, at the bride's request, a quiet wedding, the lady stating that all her friends were in America and her relations dead. Very soon the gentleman repented of his choice. He could find no fault with his wife, except that it became more evident every day that she was brooding over some secret trouble; but, of course, that was enough. Gradually, therefore, the twain began to drift apart.

One evening the gentleman returned home with his brother—a doctor with an ineradicable taste for rambling, who had returned to England as surgeon on a ship. No sooner did this individual set eyes on the wife than there was an oath, a cry, and the next moment the lady dropped as one dead. Simultaneously the doctor turned and rushed from the room, his exit being speedily followed by the banging of the street door.

What next ensued is immaterial. Let it suffice that the wife confessed all—how the rascally brother had married her in Boston in a false name, how he deserted her, and how she came to England with great expectations from a relative, but was driven to earn her livelihood—and that the wastrel wrote confirming all she said and promising never to interfere, and never to see them again. The erring woman was freely forgiven, and now she and her husband appear to be very happy.

A case of quite another kind had a painful sequel. For a long time the home life of a gentleman of means was exceedingly miserable. He became aware in various ways that his wife squandered money in some direction or other, though where it went she would not tell him.

At last his suspicions became so intolerable that he employed a private detective to solve the mystery, and this individual quickly discovered that the solution was that the lady had for some time subscribed largely and anonymously to foreign missions.

When taxed with this she not only admitted it, but calmly announced that she purposed to sell her jewels and send the proceeds in the usual direction. She is in a private lunatic asylum now.

In another instance certain suburban residents were shocked to hear that a gentleman who had recently come to live in their midst kept his wife under lock and key. Before he went to business in the morning he fastened up his premises, and till he returned at night nobody could enter or leave them. The explanation, however, was simple.

His wife, who was childless, was a dipsomaniac, and it was to prevent her getting any drink, and to make it impossible for any of her old associates to obtain access to her, that he—with her consent—adopted so drastic a method of isolation. He also discharged the servant girl, in order that the slave of drink should have sufficient work to keep her mind occupied during the day-time.

The same neighborhood had another mystery of a similar nature. A man was known to be married, his wife was known to live with him, yet for many years nobody ever saw her; and if anybody had the temerity to inquire about her once he rarely mustered sufficient courage to broach the subject to the husband a second time.

This in itself was ample to excite curiosity, but added to it was the fact that the gentleman bought the villa in which he lived, in order, it was said, to remove all risk of his being called upon to remove.

What was the secret? The wife, according to some of the old residents, met with an accident that disfigured her so hideously that the sight of her was repellent and nauseating.

By degrees, therefore, she refused to see even her dearest friends, and, becoming more and more morbid about her personal appearance, finally established herself in a darkened room.

For at least six or seven years she never once left this apartment, while during all that time nobody entered it except her husband and an old servant.

PUGNACIOUS PLANTS.—Cats have claws, dogs have sharp teeth, porcupines have needle-like quills, small boys have fists, and bees have little arrows with which to protect themselves when an enemy attacks them. Nature has provided all sorts of living things with weapons.

Even plants are soldier-like, and carry with them all the implements of war. There is the hawthorne and the locust trees, armed to the teeth with savage spears which they stick into the enemy that seeks to destroy them. The gooseberry bush is full of needles, and the sword grass of the swamps carries sharp knives with which to cut any animal rash enough to try to eat it.

Of all these soldier plants, perhaps, the most interesting, in the opinion of the Chicago Record, is the nettle; for it arms itself, like the giant savages of Patagonia, with poisoned arrows.

When it enters a vacant lot and begins to grow in thick clumps, choking out other weeds and grasses, the cattle let it entirely alone. They know how warlike it is. And the boys and girls don't try to pick it, for they have been nettled, and know how it feels.

The nettle plant is like the porcupine. It carriers millions of arrows, which it is ready to use whenever the enemy appears. These arrows, which the tiny hairs, barely large enough to see unless one looks very closely, have a broad base made up of a large number of little cells and a long needle shaped point, having at its tip a bulb or ball.

When the small boy touches the nettle plant—he doesn't intend to, of course—the little bulblike point cuts a small hole in his hand, and then, being very brittle, it breaks off. That leaves a hole in the end of the arrow, and the plant shoots out a charge of thick, syrupy liquid, called protoplasm, into the cut in the boy's hand.

This protoplasm is poison, and it isn't long before it has begun to work and the small boy's hand has begun to itch. Then he says he has been stung, and he takes care next time not to get into trouble with the warlike nettle.

The cactus also carries weapons with it, but they are entirely different from the poisoned arrows of the nettle, for the cactus fights with ugly looking barbed spears, so small that they can hardly be seen, although, as many a little girl knows to her sorrow, they can be felt very readily.

Scientific and Useful.

GLYCERINE.—It may not be generally known that glycerine is a good lubricant for the oil stone for sharpening edged tools. It does not dry into the stone as do other oils and harden the surface. The stone is easily cleaned with water.

CYCLES.—Still another winter cycle. The latest machine has two runners, one ahead of the other, and between them is a pair of treadles precisely like those of the bicycle. From these a heavy balance wheel in the rear runs the sprocket chain, and this wheel turns a small driving wheel with spurs to stick into the snow.

BY MACHINE.—A new machine which is being manufactured is said to be capable of counting and binding in packages 500,000 postal cards in ten hours. Another machine prints and cuts the cards, but this one counts them and makes them into packs of twenty-five each. The "fingers and thumbs" used in wrapping the narrow strips of paper around each pack are, perhaps, the most ingenious parts of the machine.

WATERPROOF.—Arthur L. Kennedy, the superintendent of the woolen mill at Winooski, Vt., has invented a process of making fabrics perfectly waterproof, and at the same time as soft and flexible as ordinary cloth. Garments made of this material are completely repellent to rain or other inclemencies of the weather, without any of that stiff, heavy, unweildy character usually found in rubber and other waterproof goods.

AT SEA.—An inventor proposes to utilize the compass of a ship to warn the navigators of the approach of danger. He has constructed a compass which is regulated by a chemical which will not be affected by the magnetic force on board the ship, but will be keenly sensitive to minute symptoms from any other magnetic influence exerted at a distance from the vessel up to possibly two miles. This compass when affected by the magnetism oscillates about an eighth of an inch, so the inventor asserts. When it is so affected the metal connections on the rim of the dial plate will close a circuit, causing bells to ring in the engine room as well as in the pilot house and on the bridge.

Farm and Garden.

BUTTER.—A new system of packing butter which does away with cold chambers is being tried in Australia. The butter is being packed in cubical boxes made of glass, the joints being covered with adhesive, grease-proof paper. The boxes vary in size, holding from one pound to 200 pounds. When a box is filled it is covered with a quarter of an inch of plaster paris, and this with prepared paper or canvas. The plaster, being a non-conductor of heat, preserves the hermetically sealed butter.

HORSES.—A medical man writes to express his views upon the cause and cure of cribbing among horses. Cribbing is caused by some foreign substance getting between the teeth and causing pain, or the teeth grow too close together and crowd each other. The horse instinctively pulls at some hard substance—a post or a plank of the manger—and thus spreads the points of the teeth, giving temporary relief. To remedy the fault, he would file a space between the teeth, thus removing the cause of the trouble.

CHICKS.—As to the feeding of dry grain and seeds to chick it was said the beginning could not be made too early. Soft food does not require the grinding power of the gizzard, consequently if the entire machine is to be in working order, some dry food must be supplied. There must first be grit to aid in the grinding, and then something for it to act upon. For this broken wheat, coarse oatmeal and canary seed are good. Oatmeal is probably the best food chicks can have, and it is economical as well.

THE largest bell in the world is at Moscow, Russia, and weighs 432,000 pounds.

"A DOLLAR SEEMS A GOOD DEAL OF MONEY in these hard times." Yes, but if you have a Cough, a Cold, Asthma, Bronchitis, or Incipient Consumption, a dollar spent for a bottle of Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, may prove your cheapest outlay, for you will then have the surest remedy ever known for such disease. The best family Pill, Jayne's Painless Sugar-Coated Sanative.

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On Self-Deception.

One of the most curious forms of self-deception is that of the hopeful man—the optimist. The shrivelled bloodless being who always looks upon the dark side of every situation meets the genial smiling man who has the advantage of a good circulation, and says enviously, "What would I not give to be like you, and enjoy each hour as it passes by, thinking the best of myself and of the world!"

On the whole, no doubt the victim of deficient vitality is right; but he is liable to overlook some of the off-sets to the buoyant and vigorous temperament. He is not aware how this hearty optimism, when allied with a love of congenial work, will cheerfully undertake to remove mountains and so challenge certain disappointment. Perhaps of all the forms of self-deception that of the incorrigibly hopeful man is the most insidious.

The self-deception of the optimistic man has had some affinity with the misreading of life that seems inseparable from youth. Perhaps it is useless to expect that the young will not deceive themselves. On some points they never learn anything beforehand.

A pathetic form of self-deception—at least, it always strikes us as pathetic rather than disagreeable—is the contentment and satisfaction of vulgarity. You are brought into contact with people whose ways are rough and wholly wanting in sensibility, and you think what a pity it is that this or that little difference is not perceived and an alteration made. But they do not see it thus. They have a self-made standard of conduct and behavior which they have accepted as right, virtuous, and manly, and while they live approximately very near that standard they are quite satisfied, and never dream that they look so very different, in the eyes of the average man or woman with fairly well-developed social instincts, from what they appear to themselves.

It is a mistake to feel harshly towards those who carefully cherish self-deception, for, if the mistaken estimate of life refers to serious matters, it is almost sure to end in disappointment and pain; and, if it refers to foibles rather than to serious questions, it is frequently amusing, sometimes pleasant to see, and may be even beautiful.

Who among us has not his favorite weakness which he gravely regards as a credit to himself? This good soul fancies he can advise the whole world on billiards, yet he could never make a difficult stroke with certainty in his life. The old gentleman who is smiling amusedly at the billiard sage thinks he has an eye for "horseflesh," as he calls it, yet any common rogue of the fair can cheat him.

These innocent vanities may be sent to us in order that they may draw our thoughts away from our really creditable performances, and leave our virtues to thrive in an atmosphere of lowly modesty; for this can fairly be said in favor of self-deception—that a vast number of the most capable and delightful of men and women are as unconscious of their points of superiority as they are proud of their favorite little failings.

We should always strive to be contented with the inevitable. Probably more than half the discontent in the world is uselessly expended upon things and conditions that cannot possibly be changed. Nerves are shaken, tempers tried, dispositions soured, happiness is poisoned by futile murmurings and complaints that lead to no action. But, when there is a plain chance for improvement where active effort is called for, where better things are possible, then contentment ceases to be a virtue and becomes a block on the wheels of progress.

From the earliest dawn of humanity to the present time there has been a desire among a certain class of men to get something for nothing, and it seems inborn in the human race. Some people want to get a living without labor, others want honors without striving for them, and still others think that it is the duty of the Government to give them money in one way or another. All these classes of men seem to forget that labor is not only honorable, but that, if well directed, it will supply all that is needed, if not all that is asked for.

If there is one thing more than another that a great many persons seem really to enjoy, it is minding other people's business and attempting to manage their affairs for them; and, take it all in all, there is no occupation that can be followed that pays less interest on the investment. Nobody ever yet got rich over minding other people's business, but a great many have attained wealth and honors by looking after their own, to the neglect of all other occupations.

THE grave and reasonable reproof that is meant in all kindness to subdue a fault, or the serious condemnation of a serious offence not measured by the personal or immediate inconvenience it causes, but by the reality and danger of the evil itself, is a most efficient instrument of social well-being. So to an even greater extent is the sincere, truthful, and honest expression of pleasure at conduct that commands our respect and admiration.

IT is said that tact may be acquired, but in general it is a gift, and one not only gratifying to others, but a source of pleasure to those endowed with it. It surmounts difficulties less by grappling with them than by insinuating its way through them with graceful ease. Tact is always on the alert, always ready to turn advantages to account. Like many other gifts, it may be abused; but it is one of the good things of life which promote enjoyment.

MAN himself is the author of most of his infirmities, and of them the greater number originate purely in mental or moral cause. It would be absurd to suppose that many diseases, and deaths too, should not arise from causes beyond the control of man; but his own pursuits and habits in life lay the foundation of by far the greatest portion.

THERE are many mothers who reproach themselves with neglecting their duty to their children if they do not constantly interfere with their movements; but they forget that in point of physical education Nature herself is such an excellent teacher that the apparent neglect is really a transfer of the pupil to a more efficient school.

LIFE is a building. It rises slowly day by day through the years. Every new lesson we learn lays a block on the edifice which is rising silently within us. Every experience, every touch of another life on ours, every influence that impresses us, every book we read, every conversation we have, every act of our commonest days adds something to the invisible building.

THEY who have undergone and overcome stand with their keys to open the portals of life's great emergencies to their brethren. Every stroke of sorrow that issues into light and joy is God putting into your hand the key of that sorrow, to unlock it for all the poor souls whom you may see approaching it through all your future life. It is a noble thing to take that key and use it.

IN all lives there is a crisis in the formation of character. It comes from many causes, and from some which on the surface are apparently trivial. But the result is the same—a sudden revelation to ourselves of our secret purposes, and a recognition of our perhaps long-shadowed, but now masterful convictions.

TASTE, if it means anything but a paltry connoisseurship, must mean general susceptibility to truth and nobleness, a sense to discern and a heart to love and reverence all beauty, order, goodness, wheresoever or in whatsoever forms and accomplishments they are to be seen.

WHAT makes selfishness such a deadly sin is that it is such a self-deceiving one. A thief knows that he is a thief, a liar that he has told falsehoods; but a selfish man does not know that he is selfish; hence he never repents his sin, and it grows with his growth and strengthens with his strength.

THE little things which you may do for those about you will fall back upon your heart as the summer dews fall upon the vineyards. What if it is nothing but a kind word to a schoolboy crying in the street? It dries his tears, and the aching heart grows light and glad again.

A WARM and tender heart is an invaluable possession, and we all pay a well-deserved tribute to it in our love and honor. Yet, when it is united to a weak judgment and an irresolute will, how often do we see dire results ensuing!

LET us give freely and generously of the best that is in us; let us communicate gladly all the warmth and light that have cheered us and may cheer another; but, when we are gloomy and disconsolate, sick and suffering, perplexed

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CONVERSATION is the daughter of reasoning, the mother of knowledge, the breath of the soul, the commerce of hearts, the bond of friendship, the nourishment of content, and the occupation of men of wit.

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and annoyed, when our feelings are sore and our thoughts bitter, then let us generously and manfully hold our peace and not burden others with our troubles.

LIFE is not a plaything, to be used as long as it gives pleasures and then cast aside. It is an imperative trust, a continuous obligation, from which no grief, no loss, no shame can ever absolve us.

NOTHING is so fierce but love will soften — nothing so sharp-sighted in other matters but it will throw a mist before its eyes.

THOUGH a taste of pleasure may quicken the relish of life, an unrestrained indulgence leads to inevitable destruction.

Is it not better that your friend tell you your faults privately, than that your enemy tell of them publicly?

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

FRANK.—The word rappee is of French derivation, and arose from this species of snuff being manufactured from dried tobacco by means of the rape, or raspe, an instrument by which the thin parts of the leaf were cut from the veins and fibres, the latter portions being used in the manufacture of the above-named brand of snuff.

BLAIR.—Some of the most remarkable colorations of sea water are caused by immense numbers of minute animal or vegetable organisms. It is curious that the Red Sea of the old world at present does not present any phenomenon to justify its name, and although the Spaniards applied the name of the Red Sea to the Gulf of California, modern accounts do not say anything about the color of the water.

L. M.—The Dark Ages began in the fifth century and lasted till near the fifteenth. The darkest period for Europe, generally, was during the seventh century. Things began to lighten up a little in France in the eleventh century. A knowledge of some arts was lost during the Dark Ages. In Hallam's "Middle Ages," and White's "Eighteen Christian Centuries," you can get full accounts of those times.

A. M.—Bunions result from the gradual displacement of bones in the joints of the foot, owing to the vicious practice of wearing tight shoes; and that bad practice may produce suppuration, or painful ulceration. Rest and poulticing, with the use of a shoe so constructed as to save the bunion from pressure, will subdue or moderate inflammation; but as amputation, or excision of the ends of the bones, is sometimes necessary, it may be well to seek medical advice.

E. W.—Taking your side of the story, it seems very evident that you have been badly treated; but not having heard the statement of the other party to the unfortunate affair, it becomes impossible to render an unbiassed and equitable opinion of the best mode of settling the difficulty. Still we cannot help advising a desistance from the avowed intention of taking the matter into the courts. Talk the trouble over in a calm, dispassionate manner, each making allowances for the shortcomings of the other, and we feel sure that the family rupture will be healed without resorting to such heroic measures as threatened by you. The probabilities are that both are to blame, and had you been a little more cautious and circumspect in your accusations, the unpleasantness would not have assumed such serious proportions.

TOM B.—The negro slave trade from Congo and Angola was begun by the Portuguese in 1481. Captain Hawkins, afterwards Sir John Hawkins, was the first Englishman who sold slaves in America. His expedition to transport negroes from the coast of Africa to the West Indies took place in 1563. The first negro slaves in the English Colonies of North America were brought to Virginia, in a Dutch vessel-of-war, in 1620. Their number was only twenty, and they were landed at Jamestown, where they were quickly sold. That cargo, fraught with so many evils, arrived in August, four months before the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock. It was also in the same year that, by the king's command, a hundred dissolute convicts, known to the colonists as "jail birds," arrived, and were sold as bond-servants for a term of years.

A. F.—Do not become disheartened at what seems to you a hopeless task, but send your parrot, if possible, where there is another bird of the same kind which has already learned to speak. They should be placed near enough to hear, but not see, each other, and your bird will soon learn to imitate. A good way to teach him is to speak to him at night, just when the cage has been covered over (which must always be done in winter), repeating several times in the same tone the sentence you wish him to learn. He may not seem to notice it at first, but some day, quite unexpectedly, he will repeat the sentence exactly in the same tone that he heard it. Reward him at once with a bit of sugar or fruit, or any other little dainty that he may be fond of. They are very quick at understanding that rewards are given for obedience.

CORALINE.—Among certain eastern nations precious stones were associated with the months of the year, and the fortunes of a human being were believed to be influenced by the stone which belonged to his birth month. The garnet is the stone of January, and insures "constancy and fidelity in every sort of engagement. The amethyst belongs to February, and he who is born in that month should wear it as a "preservation against violent passions and drunkenness." March has the bloodstone, which "gives courage and wisdom in perilous undertakings and firmness in affection." April has the blue sapphire, which "frees from enchantment and denotes repentance and kindness of disposition." May is represented by the emerald, which "discovers false witnesses, and insures happiness in love and domestic felicity." The agate belongs to June, and "causes its wearer to be invincible in all feats of strength, and insures long life, health, and prosperity." To July belongs the ruby, which "discovers poison, and cures all evils springing from the unkindness of friends." The sardonyx "insures conjugal felicity" to him who is born in August. The chrysolite "preserves from despair" him who is born in September. To October belongs the opal, which is not only the stone of "misfortune," but also of "hope." The pearl, which means "tears and pity," belongs to November. To him who is born in December the light-blue turquoise assures "prosperity in love."

WHEN TWILIGHT FALLS.

BY E. C.

When twilight falls, I rest and dream awhile
Night lays her finger on the lips of Care,
On Earth's dim face is seen a solemn smile,
And Nature folds her hands in silent prayer;
And I forget Life's toil and pain and sorrow,
And I remember golden days that were.

When twilight falls, I hold your hand in mine,
I meet your tender kiss, and live anew
The life your presence once made half divine;
Tears fall no longer over love untrue,
And I forget that I am dying—dying—
And I remember Life and Love and you!

Under the Portico.

BY L. P. T.

IT WAS a classic portico to all intents and purposes, giving entrance to a Palace of Art—modern, nineteenth century, christianized art; but art as robust and inspired as when Olympus, with its august diadem of gods, reared in sovereignty its haughty head in Attica.

This reflection was a great comfort to me as I sat, I cannot say rested, on one of the very unclassically-shaped benches which were anything but ornamental to the portico, awaiting the coming of a friend; and but for the leaden sky and the keenly whistling wind of the merry month of May, which swept through the classic columns, I might, with such an environment, have whiled away the heavy-footed hours by indulging in a dream of the cradle of art—"of Greece, though living Greece no more."

As a matter of fact, I beguiled my enforced leisure by staring at the devotees, gentle and simple, who thronged to make their offerings at the shrine within.

It was only a glimpse I was privileged to obtain of the fashionable crowd, who, disdaining to perform their pilgrimage on foot, were conveyed thither with all the pomp and circumstance that the perfection of equipages could compass.

Nevertheless, as carriage after carriage thundered impressively over the pavement to set down its freight of beauty and ugliness, genius and stupidity, there was ample opportunity to recognise in the representatives of the great world of to-day, the identical characteristics which distinguished the dominant class when the world was young in Athens.

This crowd, so inquisitive, so cultured, so acute, so agog after novelty, did but reflect the civilization of the old world, albeit modified and mellowed by the moral element—the outcome of Christianity.

Also were obnoxious to recognition in the personality of familiar friends and acquaintances as under the porticoes of ancient Greece, the Sophist; the Epicurean, the Stoic, the Priest, and lastly, the Slave; not, however, the abjectly cowering slave of the old regime, but the pampered menials of a pampered race. Cowering? Oh, dear, no? but deporting themselves with assurance; keenly watchful, to do them justice, of their masters' pleasure, grouping themselves in nonchalant ease about the pillars of the portico.

I was rather struck by the humor of the scene, and took a note of it at her suggestion for my next genre picture. There were no flowing draperies, to be sure, no fascinating folds for the brush to linger over and coquet with, but only the severe lines of the outdoor integuments in which it pleaseth the great world of up-to-date Britain to enshroath its liveried dependants.

There was no lack of variety in the make-up of the puppet-like figures under the portico, from the interminable overcoat profusely emblazoned with buttons of the slaves of the august chariot, to the short frock of the dapper "tiger" attendant on the smart victoria.

One individual of the species especially interested me, by reason of his total disregard of the convenience of all and sundry to whom he owed not allegiance. While his brother thralls considerately hung about the columns of the portico, thus leaving a clear space for the passers-by, my gentleman planted himself directly in the gangway, ay, and maintained his position there in spite of all comers.

It was nothing to him if ladies were compelled to step aside in order to avoid direct personal contact with him, or that gentleman ostentatiously made parabolas of themselves in a vain attempt to convey to him, as delicately as possible, that even the general public have rights.

This polite forbearance had no effect whatever upon the stolid obstructionist, who, encased in real as well as metaphorical brass, stood firm as a rock and as impenetrable, presenting a Napoleonic profile always at the same angle, and with his gaze turned almost without winking towards the grand staircase within the vestibule, by which I supposed he expected his feudal lord to descend and order him out to instant execution, should he fail to catch the first sign of his master's approach. I could but admire his steadfastness and loyalty to one idea, though slightly bored by his want of variety.

Being unpleasantly recalled to a sense of my object in being under that portico by a convulsion in the nature of a small earthquake, but which owed its origin to the uprising of some other occupants of the bench, which, being decrepit as well as ill-favored, sank about a foot at my end when the weight which had balanced it at the other was removed, I cast about, after recovering from the shock to my system, for some signs of my friend's approach.

My gaze met the face, not of the person expected, but of one that had been familiar and ever-welcome in past days; so changed that I could hardly command my voice to utter the words of greeting. When I did so I was met by a blank look that had not recognition in it.

This puzzled me, as I was aware that I had altered scarcely at all, except by the bronzing of African suns during the two years that had elapsed since I had last looked on that face in Italy.

Seeming to recover herself with an effort, however, the girl's large dark eyes, that I remembered so soft and kindly, were turned on me with a hard, calculating stare, and she reluctantly gave me a hand cold as ice. As I looked into the bloodless face, which was wont to be so softly blooming, and at the almost ashy lips, my emotion broke out in the inquiry:

"Forgive me, my dear Miss Brangwyn, but what can have happened to cause you to appear so ill and so altogether unlike yourself?"

She answered with a harsh laugh:

"I will be as frank as yourself, and reply to your catechism without circumlocution. I have been jilted, and have had an illness which has left my memory so impaired that I confess to being unable to recall your name, though I can recollect your face."

I was as much shocked by the recklessness of this statement as by the implication of brusquerie on my part. Indeed the defiant callousness of the girl's manner was so foreign to the sweet graciousness of the Maude Brangwyn I had known that I was driven to the conclusion that her troubles had unsettled the intellect of my quondam friend. I ventured to offer some expressions of sympathy.

They were received coldly enough, but I persevered at the risk of seeming to be intrusive, for I honestly wished to ascertain if I could be of use to Miss Brangwyn, and ventured the inquiry as to whether her marvellous gift of clairvoyance had suffered from the shock caused by her illness and trouble.

"Ah," returned she, with again the grating laugh which had so jarred upon my nerves, "you are upon that task, are you, Mr— Mr.—I cannot recall your name."

"Pardon me," I replied, "for not having intruded it upon your memory before. Surely my name—Frank Boughton—must have some associations for you."

"Oh, certainly," returned the young lady sarcastically; "you were one of my most credulous dupes. I hope it will not shock you to hear that my claim to clairvoyance had no foundation whatever, in fact; that I was, in truth, a sham."

Being less disgusted at this shameless admission than penetrated with the conviction that Miss Brangwyn was, vulgarly speaking, trying to throw dust into my eyes, though to what end I could not guess, I rejoined:

"You must not forget that you gave all your 'dupes' incontestable proof that you had the power to pass to the 'astral plane.' Your present disclaimer must originate in another aberration of memory."

Miss Brangwyn erected her head as a snake does before it strikes; indeed her whole expression was so full of venom that I had reason to congratulate myself that our meeting was taking place under the ægis of the public, for my fair interlocutor looked quite capable of taking the law into her own hands as she hissed out:

"Do you doubt my word? Do you think I am lying to you?"

Humbly deprecating her anger, I endeavored to make my peace by offering to escort her through the exhibition of pictures as soon as my friend, for whom I was waiting, should arrive.

"Thanks, very much," returned Miss Brangwyn. "I also await, I will not say a friend, but one who, being an artist, has business here. I have obtained a day's holiday for the purpose of meeting him."

She spoke bitterly, and I then called to mind what I had totally forgotten, that Brangwyn pere, the great City merchant and banker, since those palmy days at Rome where he had played the part of a grand seigneur surrounded by a brilliant society, had become bankrupt.

That his daughter's splendid match had been broken off in consequence, and that, more shame for us, his compeers, he and his daughter had been allowed to "go under," and to be lost to the world they could no longer benefit, without a protest. I reflected on my share in the general neglect with compunction, and it was with diffidence that I ventured to ask for some particulars of her life since we had met in Italy.

"I have lived," she informed me, "the life of a dog since ill-fortune came upon us. After my father's death, I took service as companion in a rich family of—spiritualists. The spirituality consists in isolating themselves almost entirely from their fellow-creatures in the mass, avoiding all places of worship, concerts or gatherings of any kind, lest they should contract or become saturated with 'bad fluid,' as they spiritualistically designate the atmosphere of all crowds, without meaning to convey the idea of carbonic acid gas—I see the scientific words trembling on your lips." I muttered a disclaimer to the effect that I knew what "bad fluid" in the spiritualistic sense meant, and Miss Brangwyn proceeded:

"Thus, the head of the family—a handsome, able-bodied man of about forty—fritters away his life in managing a household of servants in the morning as an occupation—his wife being a black-eyed, tressly-haired Italian woman with no capacity for anything beyond the dolce far niente existence to which she was born—and in daubing bad pictures as a pursuit in the afternoon; the evening being devoted to dining and lounging.

"And the family being of the strictest sect vegetarians, daily is the conviction forced upon me that better is a stalled ox where love is, than a 'vegetarian' dinner of herbs, and hatred therewith; our herbs being invariably served with a sauce of invective against the cook for her want of variety and invention, and of freely-expressed disgust and discontent at and with the dishes, induced, I strongly suspect, by an irrepressible hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt."

Miss Brangwyn paused abruptly with again the snake-like erection of the head and the venomous look in the eyes. Following their glance I saw it was directed upon a handsome couple—a lady and gentleman who were at that moment leaving the building by the steps into the portico.

"It is he," breathed my companion in a sort of strangled whisper dreadful to listen to, and she passed like a flash to the head of the stone steps down which the couple were about to descend to their carriage.

I noticed, without being aware that I noticed, so enthralled was I by the dramatic interest of the situation, that the equipage was of the best style and fashion, and that the high-mettled horses were with difficulty held in check.

The lady swept past Miss Brangwyn with a gesture of disdain at her intrusion; the gentleman visibly recoiled from her contact, and hastily followed with a blanched face his wife into the carriage. The servants and commissionaires were evidently unaware of anything unusual, probably taking for granted that the lady on foot chose to leave the portico by that by that particular outlet.

From this last circumstance I infer that no word was spoken, but before the door of the barouche could be closed, the sharp report of a pistol rang out, and simultaneously a piercing scream from one woman as her husband fell, shot to the heart at her side, and the demoniac yell of the other, as, with the words, "I am avenged on you both, false lover, false friend!" she dashed herself from the curbstone into the roadway beneath the trampling hoofs of the terrified horses. She was dragged thence, a shocking spectacle, mangled and bleeding and, to all appearance, dead.

A gentleman at that moment leaving the building, who proved to be a medical man, came to the assistance of the wounded occupant of the carriage.

Life was found, however, to be quite extinct, and the carriage, with its sad burden covered with a gorgeous rug, and accompanied by the half-distracted wife, who absolutely refused to be separated from her husband's body, and attended by the indispensable policeman, rolled slowly out of the quadrangle—into which but a short time before it had swept so debonairly—on its way home to Park Lane; one of the servants having been sent on to prepare the household of Mr. Colvin, for it was known at once that the dead man was the rising artist of that name.

The wretched perpetrator of all this mischief, laid on the rickety bench she had lately occupied with her wicked intent harbored and encouraged in her mind, was found by the doctor to be still breathing. An ambulance was procured and she was conveyed by the police to the nearest hospital.

Inexpressibly shocked I again sought rest on the unaccommodating bench, which began to have quite a horrible fascination for me. I would gladly have left the portico, but my friend, who was starting on a prolonged tour on the next day, must still be waited for. I appeared to myself to have already waited hours, though in point of fact it was barely thirty minutes since I had sat down untroubled and serene, to be violently shaken in more senses than one.

It seemed incredible that in a short half-hour so tremendous an upheaval of the smiling surface of things should have taken place. And this was the more difficult to realize, because the outward aspect of things was changed hardly at all.

But for some rapidly drying patches on the pavement where certain ominous stains had been washed out, and the whitened countenances of the liveried servants still in attendance under the portico, with the stream of unconscious pleasure-seekers still going and coming, I could have believed myself in a dream, and the recently enacted tragedy mere phantasmagoria.

It was very real, however, and I was aroused from my waking dream prosaically enough. An inspector of police politely requested my name and address, in case I might be called as a witness to what had taken place under the portico.

I complied, and while searching for my card-case, a carriage was driven furiously through the great gates into the quadrangle, and a gentleman of about "forty, able-bodied and handsome"—my old friend Howth to a T—with a lady over whose every feature and movement the languorous dolce far niente of the South lay like a veil, alighted at the portico, accompanied, to my great surprise, by my friend Hesseltine, whom I was expecting to meet.

Looking anxiously and hurriedly round, the party were about to enter the building, when Hesseltine caught sight of me. I rose, and was greeted with his usual effusiveness.

"How fortunate, my dear fellow, to have met you" (as if we had not made an appointment for that very purpose).

"I have been lunching with my good friends, whom of course you remember, the Howths, of Wimbledon, and they are in the greatest perplexity. Have you been here long? and have you by any chance observed a girl, 'a young lady of medium height,' "reading from a slip of paper in his hand, " 'dark hair and eyes, pale complexion, dressed in a grey checkered dust-cloak, and small grey straw hat, trimmed with violets?'"

I knew that Miss Brangwyn's eyes were deeply dark blue, and that her once blush-rose complexion was now pale to ghastliness. I had not noticed her attire in detail, but had been aware of a grey tone in it, and had perceived the odor of violets, some real flowers having probably been interpolated (such is the thoroughness of fashion, I am told) to give verisimilitude to the merely artificial blossoms.

The lady, Mrs. Howth, was the first to read the answer in my face; and quickly perceiving my hesitation, appealed to me in her pretty broken English not to keep them in suspense. "For," said she, "we dearly love our poor Miss Brangwyn, and must, oh must, find her."

Howth and I had cordially greeted each other as soon as we could get a word in edgewise; and now, how could I my hide our tale unfold? I temporised by asking particulars of Miss Brangwyn's disappearance. Howth undertook to enlighten me.

Miss Brangwyn had, he said, lived with them as friend and companion to Mrs. Howth for nearly two years. That they had been much drawn together by the sympathy which existed between them in spiritualistic matters—Miss Brangwyn being a "medium" of the very first order and subject to the mesmeric trance on very slight provocation, even by the reflection of her own fixed gaze in a mirror—that on the morning of that day she had been found in such a trance, and had been

unavoidably left in charge of a servant, during whose temporary absence Miss Brangwyn must have recovered consciousness. She had, at all events, left the house without encountering any one but a gardener, who reported that the young lady was looking "strange-like," and had told him that she was "going to see the pictures."

"Now," continued my friend, "as Miss Brangwyn had visited the exhibition with us only the day before, my wife and I considered this strange, to say the least, and as she had not returned after some hours, we became seriously uneasy, and guided only by this slight clue, are now searching for her."

"And had you then taken any means to put Miss Brangwyn into the trance?" I inquired.

"Most certainly not," replied Howth. "I never attempted to do so unless in the presence of others, and she was always carefully watched excepting in this one unfortunate instance."

"Then how," persisted I, "do you account for her having passed into the trance without the intervention of a mesmerist?"

"That is a very difficult question," replied Howth, "and might be answered in several ways quite satisfactory to a spiritualist."

"I am not a spiritualist," I retorted, "but have, I trust, some little common sense, which I should, be glad, in Miss Brangwyn's interests, to exercise upon your reply to my last inquiry, should you consider it worth while to reply to a merely uninitiated person."

"I fear that my explanation cannot be tested by merely common sense, because the data on which to form a judgment are not common. You must bring insight and faith—I don't mean credulity—to bear, or your merely common sense will reject a perhaps important clue."

"I will still," I perversely replied, "use common sense, which I take to be a general sense—appreciative of all aspects of things—as my divining rod."

"My dear fellow," here put in Hesseltine impatiently, "while you are encouraging Howth in riding his favorite hobby, we are wasting precious time. Meanwhile, as the exhibition is closing, Mrs. Howth and I have been exercising our common sense in watching the departing visitors. There go the last; but we have not seen Miss Brangwyn."

"Nor ever will," I exclaimed incautiously. Then observing my embarrassment at having made an admission, Howth, taking out his watch and remarking that there were still a few minutes to elapse before closing time, proposed that he and I should look through the rooms on the chance of finding a possible lingerer in the person of Miss Brangwyn.

"You, Hesseltine," he concluded, "can look after my wife meanwhile. You can rest either in the carriage or on this friendly bench."

They selected the bench, and it was with a shudder I saw them take possession of it with the usual alarming results; as well as with some misgivings as to the probability of a casual revelation of the dreadful associations recently connected with it. But there seemed no alternative but to comply with my friend's suggestion.

We entered the vestibule, but at the foot of the great staircase we involuntarily came to a stop and confronted each other.

"You have something to tell," said my companion. "It is no use going further. We can intercept that poor girl if she appears."

I acquiesced, and forthwith unburdened my mind of the fearful story of the past hour. The effect on my listener was overwhelming.

"Then," said he solemnly, "we shall never see that poor girl again. We may find her person, but the beautiful soul will have gone, ousted by some demon hovering and waiting for the chance of entering in and clothing itself in her mortal form, which, I greatly fear, from what you tell me, has been dragged down to destruction; though even that were preferable to harboring a lost spirit inimical to all with whom it comes in contact."

With the intention of opposing a little of my vaunted common sense to my friend's somewhat hastily deduced conclusions (as I thought them), I ventured to remind him that he had the very slightest grounds on which to build so startling a theory; that he was not even aware that Miss Brangwyn had recovered consciousness, but might be simply sleep walking.

"That is quite impossible," asserted Howth. "While the spirit is absent, as in a trance, the body remains inert and unconscious until re-inhabited by its own or another's informing spirit. And from what you say, I have little doubt that such a transference has taken place in this instance."

"But," I asked, "have you any reason to suspect the existence or non-existence—I hardly know how to express it—of any such who must have been intimately acquainted with this poor girl's personality, and all the circumstances of her life?"

"I have my suspicions," answered Howth, "which will probably be confirmed before we are much older. We must lose no more time, however, before visiting the hospital, though I dread the effect of the change in her favorite on my wife, who is very much attached to her companion. This feeling Miss Brangwyn has always fully reciprocated, and there could be no stronger proof, to my mind, of the actual exchange of the genial soul we know so well for the malignant spirit you describe as animating Miss Brangwyn's personality, than the expressions of contempt and ill-will expressed by the latter for ourselves."

We lost no more time than was necessary in informing Mrs. Howth of the accident (as we described it) to her friend, in repairing to the hospital. On arriving there we were told that the lady brought into the accident ward had already passed away.

A look of intense relief passed over Howth's face, but the grief of his wife was excessive.

"It is better so," whispered the husband to me as we stood around the narrow bed looking down at the calm face which was fast resuming its accustomed sweet and gracious expression. "I could have wished for some further light upon this mystery, but I am thankful that my wife need never know the truth of this sad story."

He looked tenderly towards his wife, who knelt with her face buried in the coverlet of the bed, so that she was unaware that at this moment a nurse glided up to her husband and put a folded paper in his hand.

"You are Mr. Howth, I believe, sir," she said sotto voce. "The poor lady there insisted upon her words being taken down and addressed to you. The doctor considered her to be raving in delirium but we could pacify her in no other way than by compliance."

My friend hastily concealed the paper and led his still weeping wife from the ward.

I followed, after arranging the matter of business with Hesseltine which had proved so considerable a factor in connecting me with the terrible tragedy just passed, and upon Howth's invitation returned with them to their house. He had meanwhile given directions for the removal of the poor girl's remains to Wimbledon, and was anxious, as he said, to examine the contents of the paper in my presence.

They were meagre enough, as might be expected, dictated as they had been by one in mortal agony and in the very throes of death.

We read them after Mrs. Howth, exhausted by her agitation, had retired for the night, her husband hoping to keep her in ignorance of the worst feature of the tragedy.

And when he pointed out, in reply to my strongly-expressed doubts as to the possibility of this, that Mrs. Howth knew very little English and lived a most secluded life, I felt that it might be possible to spare her. Even we, strong men as we were, could not unmoved, nay, without horror, read such sentences as these:

"I have but a short time to live, but I cannot die without the certainty that my just revenge has been brought home to all concerned. The spirit which now speaks to you is that of Mathilde Hervieu, who has taken possession of the body of my abhorred rival, Maude Brangwyn, during the absence of her spirit in the trance, into which she could pass almost by an effort of her own will. My disembodied spirit has watched and waited for this opportunity since my 'death' months since, in order that I might be avenged on my perjured lover and on my false friend at one coup. I have accomplished my end, and I am satisfied."

This was all. As we came to the close of the short and shameful record, my friend and I gazed at each other in dismay.

"What is this new horror that is working in our midst in these latter days?" I exclaimed excitedly; "a stirring of the dry bones of all the ancient superstitions, it appears to me, that have ever deluded poor puppet humanity."

"Say rather the coming to light of old and most vital truths, older than the oldest religions, but destined to evolve the newest and best developed of all. I can give you proof that these words we have just read are not mere idle boasting, but have a basis of sober fact.

"About six months since—mark the time—Miss Brangwyn received a letter entreating her to visit the death-bed of one who had known her in past days of prosperity, and who was dying in great distress of mind and body. The letter was signed Mathilde Hervieu, and gave an address in a street in one of the worst localities of London. You yourself must remember Mathilde Hervieu?"

"Indeed I do not," I replied. "She was usually away at school, or later, on visits, so that I never happened to meet her. She was, I am aware, a ward of old Anthony Brangwyn, and was brought up with his daughter as though she were his own child. But why she should plot against the girl with whom she habitually lived as a sister passes my comprehension."

"Ah, my good fellow," said Howth, "you have not yet plumbed the depths of the female heart and gauged its enormous capacity for jealousy. Not but what it was very hard upon poor Mathilde when she had all but secured the best match of his day—young Colvin, the millionaire painter—little Maude should return from a visit to some of her mother's connections, and should innocently and without an effort capture the painter with all his millions, which were nothing to her—the daughter of a millionaire, but which would have been so much to poor portionless Mathilde, to say nothing of the man's love, which she had fondly believed hers. She was, however, fain to bear her bitter disappointment in silence, for she had no 'case' whatever—the man who had not scrupled to win her heart had not spoken, had not 'committed' himself."

"But it seems, the intolerable sense of wrong rankled none the less in the heart of Mathilde Hervieu and poisoned her life, and, Spanish Creole as she was, she never forgave either her false lover or her innocent rival; not even when that rival, considering herself involved in the disgrace of her father's bankruptcy and downfall, refused to ratify her promise to Colvin (who was more than willing to fulfil his part of the contract) and broke off the engagement."

"But, what," I asked, as Howth paused overcome by the retrospect, "what was the result of the interview between the two girls, if indeed they met?"

"They met surely enough," he returned. "We did not oppose the interview, but countenanced it so far as to escort Miss Brangwyn ourselves, awaiting her return in the carriage near the house, so as to be within call should assistance be needed, for we had no great reason to trust Miss Hervieu's good faith.

"Maude returned to us more dead than alive. The dying woman had cursed her with almost her last breath, and had vowed her determination to make her presence felt by Maude, sleeping or waking, after her (Mathilde's) death—this menace to one of Maude's temperament was no idle one—and further, solemnly swore to be avenged upon both her and her faithless lover even after death, should opportunity serve."

"And what became of the wretched, unfortunate creature?" asked I, with my mind reverting to the magnificent home and brilliant society of which this very Mathilde had been the cherished inmate and ornament.

"She died in the night after Miss Brangwyn's visit," replied Howth. "We, of course, did what we could for her in her last moments, and gave her decent burial. There could hardly have been a life more unfortunate—for she had persistently rejected all offers of help and gone her own perverted way—or a death more tragic, unless it was that to which she had brought her innocent rival."

"She has fulfilled her threat at any rate," I said, "if we may trust appearances. What must have been the feelings of poor Colvin (for that was he, of course, who fell by her hand, though I did not recognize him at the moment) when he realized the girl's murderous intent, for, according to you, he had nothing with which to reproach himself on Maude's account at least."

"No, but," returned my friend, "the blanched face, the look of horror on his countenance, which you described to me, is almost convincing, I think, that at the supreme moment the conscience-stricken man recognized the avenging spirit of the woman he had wronged, even through the fair veil of Maude Brangwyn's mortal flesh."

Taming a Catamount.

BY I. L. G.

"I'M NOT going to be reformed, and put in order; I'm going to make the place too hot for me!" said Czerda, definitely. Czerda is an odd name, to English ears, it has a wild Hungarian gipsy, Liszt-rhapsodic sound; but just for that reason it suited its owner, a tall, beautiful girl, as lithe and graceful as a panther, and apparently almost as untamed, though not so savage; a girl with tumbling masses of chestnut hair, and great flashing black eyes. She looked foreign, and on her mother's side she was. Czerda took her Christian name from an Hungarian mother, in whom there was said to be a dash of gipsy blood. The girl, left to her English father, had run wild in a life of desultory traveling. Then he died, and Czerda was sent to relations of his in London, a prim lady and her prim brother, elderly people. She scandalized them. You might as well have given them a young colt to break. In despair, poor Miss Methuen wrote to an old friend who lived in a large house in the country.

Mrs. Lechmere wrote back:

"Send her to me; perhaps we can tame her!"

And when Miss Methuen made known to Czerda that she was to go down to the Larches to be "reformed," the young lady replied in the above dutiful terms. On the whole, however, she thought it would be rather fun to set all the people at the Larches by the ears; she would teach them how to "reform" her! She wanted to go back to her wild, roving life. The gipsy blood in her rebelled against civilized restraints.

She was put into the train by Mr. Methuen, and commended to the care of the guard.

"As if I couldn't take care of myself," she said, scornfully, and away she went, mischief in her heart, relief in the hearts she had left behind her.

At the little station of the village of St. Mary-le-Spring, a surprise awaited her.

It wasn't a groom, but a gentleman who came up to the carriage, and the gentleman was tall, slight, and extremely good-looking, with a fashionable London air and dress, and a rather lazy drawl in a very sweet-toned voice. In age he might have been about five-and-thirty.

"Miss Valmore?" he said, lifting his hat. "Yes? that's right; I am Mrs. Lechmere's brother. I have got the dog-cart here."

"How did you know me?" said Czerda, giving him her hand.

"Oh! easily; you look your name. What baggage have you got?"

He spoke kindly enough, but as if she were a child, as, indeed she was in many ways, and must have seemed, to a man of the world nearly twice her age.

Czerda described her one trunk, and her companion, directing a man-servant to look after it, led the way to the dog-cart.

"Haven't you anything else?" he asked.

"No; I shan't be here long," with a flash in her black eyes.

"That's a pity," remarked the other.

"You won't say that in a day or two."

"Very likely not," said he, coolly. "By-the-way, I must resign my advantage. My name is Lascelles—Geldart Lascelles."

"It's like a name in a novel," said Czerda.

"And yours is like the name of a sprite."

He handed her up to the dog-cart, mounted the driving-seat, and drove off.

Czerda enjoyed that drive, despite the turbulent feelings that reigned within her, and she would have thought her companion, despite his indolent drawl, very agreeable, only that she had made up her mind to dislike and oppose everyone and everything at the Larches, and even suspected that Mr. Lascelles had been sent for to assist in the "taming" process, by overawing her, if necessary; whereas Geldart had simply come to spend a few weeks with his widowed sister, and had never heard of Czerda, until Miss Methuen's letter arrived.

Mrs. Lechmere received the girl very kindly. She wasn't a bit prim, though Czerda thought she was. She was a little grave, perhaps, and felt secretly somewhat dismayed when she saw the girl; and Czerda, with the keen instincts of people like herself, instinctively perceived this.

It did not tend to allay her mischievous intentions; she began to feel the breath of the battle, and to see herself triumphant. Geldart Lascelles was far too indolent to put up with her tantrums; he would give way for the sake of peace, and Mrs. Lech-

more would be simply frightened into sending the catamount back whence she came.

Regarding herself not as a guest, but as a naughty child, a prisoner, Cserda quickly began to prove her title to the former by utter perversity, and doing everything she thought would annoy her host and hostess. The very first morning after her arrival, she arose with the lark (it was June, and lovely weather), and took a solitary ramble in the country, getting some breakfast at a cottage. When she came in at last, Mrs. Lechmere asked her, in alarm, where she had been. Geldart, who was reading the paper, merely said "Good-morning, Cserda," and took no further notice.

"I went for a ramble," announced the young rebel; "and I have had my breakfast."

"Where?" said Mrs. Lechmere.

"At a cottage——" with a defiant look.

Mrs. Lechmere admonished, expostulated. Cserda rudely walked out of the room, in the midst of the lecture.

"Geldart!" cried the lady. "What am I to do with her? I had no idea she was so wild as this!"

"Do nothing," said he, coolly.

"Do you mean—send her back?"

"No," turning a page of the Times. "Leave her to me!"

Mrs. Lechmere started.

"To you—an indolent fellow, who likes to take life easy! Pray, how would you manage a young tigress like that?"

"Better than you will, Marian. Simply give me carte blanche. Whatever she does, even to setting fire to the house, don't speak to her, or punish her. In fact, leave her entirely in my hands. The taming won't be accomplished in a day, or a week; but it will be done, and it won't take very long. It's worth doing."

"Do you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. Will you let me try?"

"For how long?"

"Give me three weeks, and if I don't succeed by that time, I'll own myself defeated."

"Very well. Meanwhile, it looks as if the place were to be turned into a bear-garden."

She went away to write her letters.

"Not a tigress," said Geldart, to himself, with a softening of eye and lip that made his handsome face handsomer still, "but a wild young gipsy—and a witch!"

He sauntered out by-and-bye, and found Miss Cserda tearing round a paddock on a bare-backed pony. As he looked at her, leaning on a gate, a groom came up in a fright.

"She've got 'old of that pony, sir," he exclaimed. "I can't ketch her!"

"Don't try!" said Lascelles, lazily, and as Cserda tore past, he smiled, carelessly, which quite spoiled the effect of her defiant glance. "She's all right," he added, to the groom. "She'd ride a zebra in safety."

Cserda rampaged about the woods all the morning, and came in to luncheon tousled and untidy, refusing to tidy herself. Mrs Lechmere was glum and silent; Geldart ignored the situation, and in his easy, easy-going fashion was perfectly affable; and again, Cserda's deliberate misconduct fell a little flat. Her next escapade—two or three days later, she had learn comparatively inoffensive in the meanwhile—was to let a whole flock of sheep in upon the lawn. This she accomplished by rising at about four o'clock, and by the time the sheep were discovered, they had worked rare havoc, eating the leaves of valuable geraniums and other flowers, and lopping the blossoms from some of Mrs. Lechmere's pet plants.

Lascelles was called to view the wreck by one of the servants. He looked, shrugged his shoulders, and ascending the terrace steps, saw Cserda standing at the top, looking as beautiful and wicked as the witch she was, with quivering nostrils, and a malicious smile on her red lips.

"How do you like it?" she asked Lascelles, impudently, as he reached her side.

"How do you?" was the answer that somewhat staggered her; but she quickly recovered herself.

"I like it very much," she said.

"Then there's nothing more to be said, my dear. Where did you breakfast this morning, in a cottage, or in the stables?"

Cserda's black eyes blazed at him, but his gray ones only looked half asleep. She turned away.

"I haven't had any breakfast, and I don't want any!" she said; but there was a kind of tightness in her throat.

He knew that, by her voice and manner, and smiled to himself.

"All right," he said; "there's plenty to be had, if you change your mind."

Cserda walked away, and Geldart entered the breakfast room.

Poor Mrs. Lechmere found it hard, after this outrage, to keep her word to her brother; but she was loyal, and said not a word to Cserda.

That young lady disappeared the whole of that day. She would not have owned that she was remorseful; but she was; and for the next few days gave small occasion for complaint. Then, as Lascelles knew she would, she broke out again. This time, she saddled one of the horses, and mounting him, rode off before breakfast. She brought him back, covered with dust, and flecked with foam.

Geldart, who had heard of the disappearance of the horse, met her on the drive, and caught the animal's bridle. He looked rather white. He hardly seemed to see Cserda, who was flushed and defiant, ready to flash out if a word were said; but all Lascelles did was to look over the horse with an anxious and critical eye.

"All right," he said, coolly; "there's no harm done."

"I wouldn't do him any harm!" said the girl, scornfully, but feeling it keenly that the question of her safety did not seem to have occurred to Lascelles.

"I wouldn't trust you!" he returned, beginning to lead the horse towards the house.

"You don't care what might happen to me," said Cserda, mockingly.

"Why should I? Naturally enough, I thought of my horse."

"I wish I had hurt him!" said Cserda, half sullenly.

"I daresay."

"Why don't you send me back?" said she. "You must hate me, and I hate to be here. You won't make me good; it's no use trying."

"My dear girl, life is too short to ruffle oneself over trifles. You can go back to-morrow, so far as I am concerned. I don't care to keep you. As to hating you—one doesn't hate children, however silly and malicious they are."

They had reached the foot of the terrace steps.

Geldart dropped the bridle, and turned to lift Cserda to the ground. She pushed aside his hand.

"I can dismount myself!" she said.

He shrugged his shoulders, and drew back, and Cserda dismounted easily and nimbly enough.

Geldart set his teeth for a moment; then smiled, as he followed her into the house, while a groom took the horse.

"I stabbed myself worse than I stabbed you," he said, inwardly; "but the treatment is beginning to tell. There's a woman's heart under that wild, perverse spirit. You were wounded, were you? because I didn't seem to care whether you broke your neck or not."

Cserda did not appear at breakfast. She would not have acknowledged the fact, but she was ashamed to appear, and too proud to seek for breakfast elsewhere, so she got none, and nobody seemed to care for this, more than for anything else. Why should they? as Geldart had said, even as to whether she came home safe, or was thrown, perhaps killed?

Deep in the poor girl's heart there was a miserable feeling of failure. She did not create any disturbance; she shocked no one; got no nearer being sent away. Geldart was really indifferent to everything she did, however outrageous. He despised her too much to be even angry with her. She was a half-mad gipsy child, and, perhaps, her tantrums rather amused him; they certainly made no other impression upon him. All that day the girl kept out of the way. Luncheon passed, tea came, and still no Cserda.

"The child must be starving," said Mrs. Lechmere to her brother.

"Let her," he answered; "it will do her good."

The next day Cserda did not appear at breakfast. She went out into the woods, and got some at a keeper's lodge. Her luncheon was bread and cheese, taken in a recess in the park, and she could hardly eat it; the food seemed to choke her. Late in the afternoon, she was going round by the side of the house, when she came suddenly in sight of Lascelles, who was standing by his dog-cart, equipped for driving. He was examining some portion of the harness, but looked up as Cserda approached.

"Well," he said, as unconcernedly as if he had seen her ten minutes ago; "do you want a drive?"

"No!" Her heart was in her throat.

"Just as you please. You can come, if you like."

"I don't want to come!"

She turned, and walked into the house.

"Stevens," Lascelles said to the groom, "you can take the cart back to the stables."

He, too, entered the house, threw down gloves, whip, and hat in the hall. He knew where he was likely to find his young rebel.

He took his way to the library, a room Mrs. Lechmere rarely entered, and never at this time, and so silently he entered, that Cserda, flung down in a deep fauteuil, her face buried in the cushions, did not hear him. He went close up to her.

"Cserda!" he said, and she sprang to her feet, facing him, cheeks and eyes burning.

"Why did you follow me?" she said, passionately.

"Well, it occurred to me that there had better be an end of this sort of thing. What do you say?"

The girl looked at him, drawing her breath heavily.

"I don't care!" she said, then, "I don't care for anything. Leave me alone!"

She turned her back to him.

He laid his hand on her shoulder.

"You are too young," he said, with a tender gravity she had never yet heard from him, "to be quite hardened——"

"Don't speak to me like that!" Cserda broke in, almost fiercely. "I am hardened, I am bad, I——"

"Hush! Cserda! hush! My poor child!"

He tried to turn her towards him. She broke from him, and flung herself down in the chair again, bursting out into terrible sobbing, that shook and racked her slight frame as if it would tear her to pieces. Yet Lascelles, still mastering himself, stood by for two or three minutes, silent and inactive; it was best to let the poor girl's agony have way for a little while, it was inevitable, it was good for her. The evil in her was broken up, as the ice on the rivers breaks up in the spring, and the deep waters were rushing over her soul. But after that respite, Geldart bent down, and gently put his arms about Cserda, to lift her up. She struggled with him.

"Let me alone!" she said, "let me alone! You despise me! You said so! You ought to—I deserve it!"

But he paid no heed to her wild words, and though she made a determined effort to free herself, her strength was helpless against his; he wrapped her close into his arms, and drew her head on his breast.

"Cserda! Cserda!" he said, half passionately, though he tried to be only tender and soothing; but the deeper feeling mastered him, now that he actually held her to his breast. "Cserda! you must not sob so! You are not bad, my poor child—only mistaken and unhappy!"

"It's cruel to say that—just to comfort me!" she gasped, trying to check her sobs, and quivering and shrinking in his clasp. "You don't think it! Oh! do let me go!"

"No, Cserda! you must be quiet, and submit. I have let you have your own way all this time; now I will have mine."

He sat down in the chair, and drew her to his feet, still keeping her close folded in his arms; and poor Cserda, well nigh utterly exhausted, and bewildered by this new phase in the man who had not seemed to care what became of her, lay still, with beating heart that felt the throb of his, and only a sobbing breath now and then. And by and-by he took the little hand in his, and kissed it with trembling, caressing lips, and then he kissed her brow with infinite tenderness.

"My darling, wayward gipsy," he whispered, "don't you understand me now, Cserda? I always loved you, dear. When I first saw your face at the carriage window, I made up my mind to try and win you. You don't know what it cost me to seem cold and indifferent, when I wanted to take you in my arms, and tell you how very, very dear you were to me!"

This was indeed heaping coals of fire on Cserda's head. Her anguish burst out afresh, the more poignant because those words of Geldart's thrilled her with such happiness.

"Oh! you can't love me!" she sobbed. "You must not! I'm not worth it. I have been only wicked and ungrateful. You think there's good in me! but there isn't—there isn't!"

"Hush! my dearest. I won't let you talk so. Listen to me, Cserda. I saw at once how it was with you. You were a wild young creature, unused to restraint, hating all discipline, with a headstrong perverse will, and a good deal of spite in you. But there was a mine of gold under all the dross, and I knew the way to reach it. You began to see yourself, as you imagined I saw you, and you were ashamed and unhappy, because—tell me, Cserda, don't you know why? Am I mistaken, dear? You do care for me a little, don't you?"

Poor Cserda, though she was so happy, felt very crushed and penitent.

"You can't ever quite forgive me," she whispered, tremulously.

"My bonnie gipsy! am I not a conqueror? You own yourself tamed, don't you?"

"Yes," said Cserda, meekly.

"My darling! all my own—even now."

So Cserda was tamed, despite her defiant protest that no one could or should accomplish that feat. The evil spirit was conquered for ever, and she and Mrs. Lechmere are now the best of friends. The latter freely admits that her brother uttered no vain boast, when he promised to tame the gipsy in three weeks. He did it, with four days to spare!

At Home and Abroad.

Experiments are being made in Arizona in the establishment of a carrier pigeon messenger service between remote mining camps and the nearest towns or railway shipping points. So far as tried the service has proved successful and very valuable. The trails out from some of the large camps are long and difficult to traverse at times, and the carrier pigeons insure a great saving of time in exchanging communications.

A mat made entirely of ivory is certainly one of the curiosities of the world. Only three of these mats exist, the best known, measuring eight feet by four feet, coming from a state in the north of India. It was only used on great court occasions, the Rajah sitting upon it to sign important papers. Some 6,000 pounds of ivory were used in its manufacture, only the finest strips being available, as the mat is as neatly made and flexible as a woven material.

Electric railroads are proving of great benefit to the farmers in Maine. The trolley lines run out from the large cities and towns to villages far removed from steam railroad communication, and in several districts arrangements are making to run trolley milk trains, vegetable trains and the like, to enable the farmers to get their produce quickly to market. It is even proposed to run trolley coal trains to supply coal to small towns that now use only wood.

It seems that two species of native birds are becoming quite rare in South Carolina—the showy red bird and the mocking bird. The threatening extermination of these birds is said to be due to the demand for them in the North, and, in the case of the red bird, the introduction of the English sparrow is to blame. The mocking bird, however, is quite capable of holding its own against the saucy but pugnacious foreigner. Next to singing there is nothing a mocking bird loves so much as fighting.

A new form of advertising has made its appearance in New York. A somewhat antiquated specimen of a horse is provided with two large wooden flaps which hang on either side and one which covers the animal's forequarters. On these boards advertising notices are displayed in big letters. A small boy, wearing an old uniform, rides the horse, and the outfit attracts much attention. This is probably the first authenticated case in this country in which the horse has served as a "sandwich."

For several years the young men of Owl's Head, Me., had been trying to organize a brass band. One evening last week the young ladies got tired of waiting for the boys to go ahead, so they took the matter into their own hands and organized one among themselves. Tin horns, fish horns, dinner bells and cow bells were all pressed into service, and they paraded the town with torchlights made of brooms soaked in kerosene, with the result that the musical awakening of the community is now assured.

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease, and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven catarrh to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address,

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

Sold by Druggists, 75c.

Our Young Folks.

THE MAGIC BOOK.

BY M. B.

"I WON'T have it, I tell you; I won't have it," grumbled the Dwarf, and he poked his tall rod cap right through the middle of the spider's web.

The spider was very angry, for it really was a fine web, and it was not the first that old Jeremy had spoiled.

"Why cant he mind his own business?" she grumbled, as she sulked in a corner. "What does it matter to him if I catch the stupid flies as they come out of his cave? He thinks he is everybody. Perhaps some day he will find out—— Hullo! There's someone coming."

The spider peeped out of her corner and then hurried down the rope ladder.

Two frogs were hopping slowly—very slowly, and one of them had hurt himself—up the path towards the cave.

The spider let herself down until she was swinging backwards and forwards above their heads, and listened as hard as she could.

"He is so clever," said the young frog "he is sure to be able to cure you. He will look in his big book, and tell you all about everything. How, when, and where you hurt yourself, and what you must do to get your throat better."

"Wonderful!" said the old frog.

"Not a bit of it," said the spider. "Now, my great-aunt she really is a wonderful person."

The sick frog gave a jump.

"It is only the old spider," said the other frog. "She's always talking about her great-aunt. Come along."

The spider watched them disappear into the cave.

"They are no good," she said. "Never mind, I'll wait. Here comes Mr. Coleo, perhaps——" and she ran up the ladder and down again.

This time a beetle and a grasshopper were to be seen strolling up the path.

"Of course he is very clever," said the beetle; "but he's so cross, and then he expects so much. When one considers——"

"Dear me!" said the grasshopper, as the spider, who had come down her ladder rather more quickly than she intended, appeared suddenly in the path before them.

"My great aunt——" began the spider, not wishing to waste any time.

"My good friend," said the beetle, "we have heard all about your great-aunt."

"Have you paid old Jeremy for mending your wing, Mr. Coleo?" said the spider.

"I have nearly finished the work," said the beetle haughtily. "I am about to finish it now."

"Then let me give you a friendly hint," said the spider. "Don't do it."

"But then, next time he is ill!" said the grasshopper.

"He can cure himself," said the spider.

"How?" said the beetle.

"You say old Jeremy is clever," said the spider. "Nonsense! Not he! He gets all he knows out of his magic book. If my great aunt had that book, or if you had it, Mr. Coleo, you could mend wings, and legs and throats," she added, as the two frogs came down the path.

"And there would be nothing to pay, no work to do," said the beetle.

"Exactly," said the spider, and she climbed up the ladder into her corner again.

"Nothing to pay," said the frog.

And the beetle told them all that the spider had been saying.

"There's something in it," said the young frog; "he does get it all out of his book."

"And he does scold," said the old frog; "but he sends away the pain."

"But I don't see how we could get the book," said the beetle.

"Get the book? Steal it, do you mean?" said the sick frog.

"Not steal—borrow it," said the beetle; "just to look at it, you know."

"Old Jeremy goes out every night," said a voice from above.

"Old Jeremy goes out every night," repeated the grasshopper.

"But he rolls a big stone in front of his cave," said the frog.

"There are those who can jump, and those who can dig, and those who can hop over stones," said the voice.

And the grasshopper repeated the words.

"Well, well," said the beetle.

"I shall have nothing to do with it," said the sick frog.

"We shall see," said the beetle, and he began to make a move down the path.

"It's all right," chuckled the spider. "They'll do it, and won't old Jeremy be annoyed! If they get the book, I'll soon steal it from them and hide it away. Then they'll have to come to me, and won't I make them pay!"

That night the stars were shining their brightest as old Jeremy rolled the big stone in front of his cave and started out on his midnight walk.

Three minutes after he had disappeared there were voices to be heard, and the old spider crept out of her corner.

"I shall dig a pathway under the stone," said one voice.

"That's Mr. Coleo," said the spider.

"I shall jump over it," said another voice.

"That is silly Hopperina, the grasshopper," said the spider.

"I shall hop through the window," said the third voice.

"That's old Squatta, the frog," said the spider. Then there was silence.

"Now they are fairly at work," said the spider. "What fun! How I am enjoying myself! If they get the book, old Jeremy will be as wild as a bear; if they upset his things, he'll scream like a peacock; and if he finds them there, why that would be best of all! I'll tell a bat to warn his master that there is danger at home, and then whilst he is punishing them, I'll slip into the cave and get the book."

The spider hurried away, eager to make more mischief. If she had stayed only a minute longer she would have heard a voice cry "Help! Help!" and have seen the grasshopper come tumbling down behind the big stone.

Old Jeremy came hurrying home, crosser than ever; but just as he was going to roll away the stone he caught sight of the grasshopper.

"Hullo;" he said grumpily. "Hurt yourself?" The grasshopper could not speak.

Old Jeremy put one hand in one big pocket and one in the other, pulled a bandage out of one, and some ointment out of the other, and before the grasshopper had time to think about it, her leg was tied up and she was made comfortable.

"Come to-morrow morning," said old Jeremy, and the grasshopper crept away feeling very much ashamed of herself.

Two minutes later a beetle and a frog came out of the cave, and as they crawled away in the darkness the beetle murmured—

"It must have been a magic book. Oh, my head!"

"And my foot!" groaned the frog; "and he wasn't cross a bit."

When the spider came home, the stone was once more rolled into its place.

"I hope I'm in time for the fun," she said. "I lost my way coming back, but he can't be home yet. I must wait."

And the spider waited and waited all night; but nothing happened.

Early next morning, as soon as the stone was rolled away, the spider peeped into the cave.

The magic book was gone from its place.

"Then they got in," she said. "He knows his power is gone, and here they come. I expect they want to consult me."

They were not talking to one another this time as they came up the path. They were far too miserable too talk.

"Well," said the spider; but they all began to shout angrily. The spider hurried away.

"I wonder what has happened!" she said.

She watched them all go into the cave, and she saw the beetle walk up to old Jeremy and show him the broken horn.

Then she tumbled off the bank on to the ground, for the magic book was lying open in its usual place. She swung herself on to a stone near the cave and she heard old Jeremy say—

"Be thankful you are not killed. Never again meddle with a magic book."

"We won't," said the grasshopper.

"We won't," said the frog; "and as for that old spider——"

"That wicked old spider!" cried the beetle.

The spider did not wait to hear any more.

"I almost think," she said, as she hurried away; "I really think I will find a new home. The fact is, I want to live nearer my great-aunt."

ABOUT SPIDERS.

One of the most remarkable devices of an animal to escape observation I witnessed in the Sierra Madre mountains, says a writer in a California paper.

In passing through the bush I found the trail crossed by a stout web of a large black and white spider, which the moment it saw me began to swing to and fro, giving a rocking motion to the entire web. This increased so rapidly that in a very short time the spider had disappeared from view, though I was not four feet from it.

The insect had simply produced such rapid vibrations that I could not follow it, and when I retired it gradually ceased its motion and became visible again. Such a trick would easily deceive a bird.

I paused, and waited to see how often the insect would return to its original position and again disappear, and in the short space of twenty minutes it had changed no less than thirty times, first as above described, and then again disappearing so rapidly that it struck me as the most marvelous freak of nature that I ever witnessed.

In a certain drug store there was a spider's web which had been superbly decorated with flakes and scales of logwood.

It was thought at first that this beautiful passementerie effect had been produced accidentally, but after watching for a few minutes an observer saw the spider descend into the box of logwood, affix a thread of silk to a flake of the dye, hoist it to the web above, and securely fasten it to one end of the transverse strands. The glittering scales moved at the slightest jar or when they were struck by a current of air, and were dazzling to the eye.

"On one occasion," says an arachnologist, "I noticed a spider which had swung down from the ceiling of a church and hung suspended just above the organist's hands. The organist informed me that he had repeatedly noticed that spiders were affected by music. Several days afterward, while seated at the organ, I observed the same spider. Several times I drove it away and enticed it back by playing alternately soft andante and loud bravura selections."

During a recent concert at Leipsic a spider was seen to descend from one of the chandeliers while a violin solo was being played, but as soon as the orchestra began to sound it quickly ran back again.

Mr. Welwitsch, who has recently explored the country about Cape Negro, in Africa, tells of a curious tree called the spider tree. It grows on windy plains, its stems attaining a diameter of four feet, although it does not exceed one foot in height.

It puts out two leaves, each six or eight feet in length, and these are split by the whistling of the wind into a number of stiff, narrow ribbons, bearing no little resemblance to the legs of a gigantic spider. This resemblance becomes startling when a strong breeze puts the log like leaves into rapid motion, and the negroes shiveringly exclaim that the great spider is struggling to get loose.

The female spider is always larger than the male, and if accounts be true, is of a rather peppery disposition. When the husband becomes obstinate and will not obey orders, the loving wife eats him up, to get rid of him, and seeks a more obedient spouse.

WHEN THERE IS NO AFTERNOON.—Strangers to Washington often remark upon the custom of addressing one at all times of the day by the uniform salutation "Good morning."

It sounds odd to any such person to hear one address him with "Good morning" at five o'clock in the afternoon.

This custom is as old as the Congress of the United States and the hours of executive business in the various departments. It is said to be directly due to the morning hour in Congress.

The standing rule of the two Houses of Congress provide for a "morning hour," which extends from twelve to two o'clock, and that provision has made it common to refer to "morning business" in Congress, which occurs before the "regular order."

Frequently the "regular order" is not resumed, and the morning hour is extended until four or five o'clock, especially in the latter days of Congress and when there is a great pressure of business.

In the executive departments reference is made to the "morning's work" during the entire day. This is all of course official parlance.

The custom has grown so that it extends throughout social life, and in all sorts of private business, so that it is morning until all Government business is at an end in Washington. When the sun goes down and twilight sets in, it is "Good evening." It is never afternoon in the national capital.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

The first illumination with gas in the United States was in Boston, 1822.

Twenty-nine cases of homicide are waiting to be disposed of in New York.

The best corks come from Algeria. There are 1,500,000 acres of cork forests in that country.

The bicycling people are figuring on selling 2,000,000 machines this year at an average of $50 each.

A steel ship has been constructed in Cardiff, with the standing rigging, as well as hull, all of steel.

Out of a family of nine at Newcastle eight are still living. The oldest is 91 and the youngest 73. The average age of the family is 82.

In spite of its ice and severe cold, Labrador possesses 700 species of flowering plants, 50 ferns and over 250 species of mosses and lichens.

In Russian Poland all trains must stop at every station until the Chief of Police (or gendarmerie) of the place gives permission for their departure.

Most of the inhabitants of Haugesund, Norway, have never tasted intoxicants. It has a population of 6,000, and for 20 years not a drop of spirituous liquor has been sold there.

A bill has been presented in the New York Legislature to prohibit all children under sixteen years of age from being on the street after 8 P. M. in winter and 9 P. M. in summer.

A new use for old horse cars has been found in East Hampton, Conn. After the trucks are taken off they are dumped down embankments to help to fill in for the new tracks on the Air Line.

Three-quarters of a second is the time occupied by the fall of the knife in the guillotine. The knife is weighted by 120 pounds of lead, falls nine feet, and cuts through flesh and bones as easily as through a tier of soap.

Charles Quimby and his wife, of Sandwich, N. H., aged respectively 92 and 91 years, died within a few hours of each other last week. They had been married seventy years, and their seven children, the youngest being about 50 years old, are all living.

The importation into the United States of plants from China and Japan is forbidden on account of the prevalence of cholera in the Asiatic countries. Nothing holds the germs of disease so well as the soil in which the plants are shipped.

Three car-loads of excellent horses were sold in Denver last week at $10 apiece. They had been shipped all the way from Walla Walla, Wash. The horses were of fine stock, and but a short time since would have brought at least $100 apiece in the same market.

State pride is playing an important part in the building of the new State Capitol at Olympia, Wash. No material except that produced in the State is used in its construction, in the matter of lumber, for whatever purpose, only such as is grown in Washington is to be used.

The parrot seems, of all birds, to take the most intelligent interest in music, for a good one will reproduce a tune with great accuracy, and the attention they show to almost any form of music, especially when of a simple and tuneful character, seems to prove a keen appreciation.

The longest telegraph line in the world above ground and without a break has just been completed in Australia. The line runs from Rockhampton, in Queensland, to Broome, in Western Australia, and crosses about two-thirds of the entire continent. The total length is something over 6000 miles.

Several carloads of horses that started from Oregon for Kentucky last week were stopped at Shoshone, Idaho, by the owners, and the horses were taken from the cars and sold for 50 cents apiece. This was more profitable than to pay the heavy freight bill with what the horses would have brought in Kentucky.

One hundred and nine thousand locomotives are at present running on the earth. Europe has 63,000, America, 40,000, Asia, 2300, Australia, 2000, and Africa, 700. In Europe, Great Britain and Ireland take premier position with 17,000 engines, Germany has 9000, France, 11,000; Austria-Hungary, the second largest continental country, has 5000.

A wealthy resident of Kokomo, Ind., is going to move to Peoria, Ill., and will take his $30,000 house with him. The house is of stone and brick and handsomely finished and decorated. It will be taken down very carefully, the stone, pressed brick, plate glass, mahogany panels and every other part being carefully marked, and will be shipped by rail to Peoria and there reconstructed. The cost of moving the residence will be about $15,000.

A case has been brought to the attention of a Dover, Me., paper, in which the parents of a small boy were talking about hanging, and, in the course of the conversation, the method was described minutely. A little later the child went out, got a rope, and, tying it to a beam, proceeded to experiment. He was so successful in his investigation that when he was found he was black in the face, and would have died soon.

FORTUNE.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

Ah! Fortune is a fickle jade;
She flaunts and flirts, then flies away,
And all our fairy visions fade,
Like frost-killed flowers in May.

Misfortune is her sister,—twin,—
They walk full oft together,
They roam thro' Earth's tormenting din,
In fair and stormy weather.

MANNERS OF LIVING.

The interior of New Guinea is one vast mass of upheaved granite, without traces of mineral or metal ores, the strata tilted and piled topsy-turvey. Everywhere the work of volcanic eruptions is to be seen. Such a thinly-populated region, considering the fact that it was an absolutely new country and that fruits and small game were so plentiful, I did not suppose could exist, writes Van Gerstel, the explorer.

The natives we saw from time to time, at a distance mostly; they never molested us. Their heads were flat on top, with long, curly black hair; they went entirely naked. Their buttock extended out eight and even ten inches, this repulsive deformity constituting a support amply capable of sustaining a child in a sitting posture.

Nor was this their most marked peculiarity. Some of the nursing mothers throw their breasts back over their shoulders or under their arms, at will, to feed the infant carried in a sling between their shoulders.

The Papuans are a very unattractive race to look upon. In arms they were primitive to a degree that was astounding. They had neither bows nor spears that I saw, their only weapons being stone hatchets. Of the use of metals they seemed to be entirely ignorant.

In the dry season they made their homes in caves, which they found or excavated for themselves. Some of these cave dwellings I visited, discovering fragments of their repasts and occasionally a broken stone ax. In the rainy season they live high in the trees, where they build rude houses of sticks laid around and intertwined with the branches, thatched with dried alang-alang and reached by shaky-looking stick ladders.

Most startling was the solitude, the destitution of life and motion in the great central plateaus which we reached in our gradual ascent from the river level. There were plenty of the small creature of the squirrel tribe, some of the peculiar pig-headed deer we have in Java, and an occasional little tiger cat, rather handsome than hurtful-looking. That was all.

Shepherds in the interior of South Africa frequently experience great difficulty in securing from the home station their regular weekly supplies of rations, and are often compelled to exist on short allowance, owing chiefly to their over-indulging when in the midst of plenty.

On a certain sheep station in the interior, a wily old shepherd—known as Sandy—thought he would, at all events, guard himself against a short supply of damper (a large cake, baked in hot embers) by marking off on its surface the size of the slice to be eaten each day from Sunday, which was the time devoted to baking operations.

On one occasion a Johannesburg prospector accidentally met Sandy tending his flocks on the lonely karoo, and was thereaway invited to dine with the old shepherd.

The goldseeker gladly accepted the invitation, and everything passed off satisfactorily until the marked damper was handed to the guest, who, having a keen appetite, helped himself to a rather large supply. In fact, it quite amazed poor Sandy, who exclaimed:

"Well, well, man! I had no idea you would eat so much when I asked you in! Why, you have cut my damper into Thursday, and here it is only Tuesday in the week, with not another pinch of flour in the cabin!"

Pleasing as Indian tents are by day, with the waving shadows of the grass or the broad flecks of sunlight from between the branches of the trees upon their white sides, which shade into a dull brown at the tops, where the skin-covering is discolored by the smoke ascending in lazy, blue columns, the true time to enjoy the beauty of an Indian camp is at night, says a writer in the Century. Then the tents are illuminated by a central fire, and are all aglow under the stars, the silhouettes of the inmates creating an animated shadow world.

Here one catches the picture of a group of children watching an elder twisting his fingers to form a fox chasing a rabbit on the tent wall (perhaps some one is telling a myth about the little fellow, for suddenly the shadow rabbit sits up waving his ears as though he had outwitted his pursuers); yonder a woman is lifting the pestle, pounding corn in the great wooden mortar; near by are some young girls with their heads together, whispering secrets; old men recline on one elbow, smoking; and over there a young man is bidding the baby boy dance; while the sound of song and friendly chatter fills the air. The picture is a of a life simple and contented within itself.

As the men are the life and soul of the religion of Burmah, so the women are the heart and soul of the life of the country. Mongolian in race, and Indian now by conquest, they have achieved for themselves a freedom which may be envied not only by their Indo-Chinese sisters, but by European women as well.

The Burmese are absolutely the freest women in all the world. Marriage is an equal contract, all property being held jointly. Property inherited by a woman before or after marriage, or earnings made by her, are absolutely her own.

Marriage is an affair of the heart, and among this easy-going and affectionate people love-matches are not delayed till the husband can provide a home and an income, but the girl-wife and boy-husband are taken into the house of either parent, and maintained till a separate household can be set up.

If love is lost, or there is found to be incompatibility of temper, or if either wife or husband become a drunkard, a gambler, or vicious in life, divorce or separation can be easily obtained by application to the Magistrate, with equal division of the joint property.

Divorces are, however, rare; family life is said to be very affectionate, and children are adored. Wives are consulted in all affairs of life, and a farmer would hardly dare to sell his paddy harvest without the consent of his wife; in fact, she is found to be a much closer bargainer than he is.

Grains of Gold.

People are generally judged by their mistakes.

Character is essentially the power of resisting temptation.

Cowardice is always scorned and deceit universally detested.

It is but an ill-filled mind that is filled with other people's thoughts.

The imagination furnishes us with spectres, but the conscience clothes and nurtures them.

There can be no excess to love, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense.

Never speak evil of any one. Be just before you are generous. Save when you are young, and enjoy your savings when you are old.

For this world in itself is but a painful and uneasy place of residence, and lasting happiness, at least to the self-conscious, comes only from within.

Physical exercise and intellectual occupations contribute to give variety to life and promote longevity; though one should be careful not indulge in excesses in either.

Two properties are necessary to every form of life—the power of coherence and the power of expansion—and only as both are exercised in due proportion can there be growth or progress.

Femininities.

You never hear a henpecked husband suing for a divorce.

An 18-year-old girl in Chicago has just yawned her jaw out of joint.

A woman to be a genuine society leader must own several red lamp shades.

A lady of 83 lusty winters has just distinguished herself in West Stoneham, Me., by killing a bear.

He: How long have you been a widow? She: What an impertinent question! Ever since my husband died.

The woman of Baltimore provided over $20,000 towards endowing the medical department of Johns Hopkins University.

Wife, during a domestic wrangle: The villain in the play is always a man. Husband: Yes; and it is always a woman who makes him one!

Boiled potatoes are much harder to digest than roasted or baked, the former requiring three hours and a half and the latter from two to two and a half.

It is proposed to restore the stone that marks the grave of Dr. Johnson in Westminster Abbey. The surface of the present gravestone is decayed, and the inscription is half obliterated.

It is rumored in London that the Queen contemplates conferring a Dukedom upon Princess Beatrice, with remainder to her sons. It is probable, if this intention is carried out, that the Princess will be created Duchess of Kent.

"I can overlook his past," sighed the grieved and mortified young woman, after a careful inspection of the ring she had just received from her lover, "but I own I am bitterly disappointed with his present." The diamond was paste.

Many things absolutely essential to human happiness, well-being and usefulness, are looked upon as little things, and unimportant things, by the busy people of the day, but the little things count, after all, for human life is made up of comparative trifles.

A Lewiston, Me., man borrowed a neighbor's battery for treatment of his rheumatism. After he had been cured by application of the battery he discovered that he had never turned on the current once. He had simply taken hold of the handles and faith did the rest.

A woman shoemaker is one of the novelties in Williamsburg, N. Y. She is an elderly dame, and she works in a shop with her elderly husband, not far from the ferry-house. Both are Italians, and they arrived from their native country about a month ago. Business with them is said by the neighbors to be very good, and the woman's work is skillfully done.

The American Girl is again complimented; this time, by Novelist Hall Caine, who has found her "prettier, more attractive, more bewitching than English women, but"—and here comes the thorn to the rose—"not so regularly beautiful. The straight, almost Greek nose, and the ineffably lovely and haughty upper lip of the most perfect type of English girl I have not seen equalled in America, I must say."

When the picture of the Russian Grand Duchess Olga, whom he later married, was shown to the late King Charles of Wurtemburg, he looked at the portrait carefully and then said, dryly: "The portrait is highly flattering; the hair is too full, the eyes are too brilliant and the skin too fresh." "But, your Majesty, you do not know the Princess," answered the adjutant, who had been sent from St. Petersburg. "No, that is true," said the King, "but I know the court painters."

London has a woman who claims the proud degree of master of surgery. Her name is Miss Louise Aldrich-Blake, and she has a brilliant record. Last year she took her M. D., and this year she has passed a successful examination qualifying her for a degree which no woman hitherto has gained. Five young women in London will become full-fledged bachelors of surgery this spring. America has many women physicians, but surgery is a branch of the medical profession which has had no attractions for them so far.

That woman in politics means purity in politics one Kansas woman has started out to demonstrate in an interesting way. Mrs. D. P. Leslie was elected County Clerk in Brown county at the last election. She, of course, pledged herself to appoint only deserving persons to office in her control. She has begun by making her daughter Chief Deputy. She knows the character of this appointee thoroughly, and is satisfied of her fitness and integrity. Now the workers are wondering how far her faith in her own family goes.

Annie May Abbott, the Georgia "electric magnet," whose feats of strength created a sensation in this country some years ago, is amusing herself now with the strong men of China and Japan. The Japanese wrestlers, whose physical strength is celebrated the world over, were unable to raise Miss Abbott from the floor, while with the tips of her fingers she neutralized their most strenuous efforts to lift even light objects, such as a cane from a table. The Japanese papers say this is hypnotism, while the Chinese journals accuse her of being in league with the powers of evil.

Masculinities.

He who thinks his place below him will certainly be below his place.

If there is anything in a young man the Roentgen ray should bring it out.

Have confidence in your own judgment; it's apt to be as good as the next man's.

"Can't I rent you this house next to the church?" "No; my wife likes to come in late."

If you want a man to think you are smart you have only to make him imagine that you think he is smart.

Old husband: I think I ought to make a few changes in my will. Young wife: Don't worry about it, darling. Leave everything to me.

In Burlington, N. J., a man was sentenced, for drunkenness, to attend 30 temperance lectures. He attended one and has reformed.

"What do you play over at Mr. Johnson's, dear?" "Just poker, my love." "Well, that's all right. I never feel uneasy unless you are playing cards."

President Fauro, of France, has attached a photographer to his traveling retinue, who will take series of pictures of the President on public occasions for the kinetoscope.

Husband, to his wife, who is going off on a journey: And then, Emily, be so good as to send me a curtain lecture from time to time. I shall hardly manage to get to sleep, you know.

An old bachelor found a hair in his soup. With a kindly smile he turned to the cook, saying: Thanks, Josephine, for the delicate souvenir. Next time, if you don't mind, I should prefer to receive it in a locket.

Charles Flint, of Brooklyn, has the latest scheme of rapid transit. He has designed a bicycle boat, operated by foot power, in which he expects to cross the Atlantic, from Sandy Hook to the Lizard, in 70 hours.

Fall River claims the smallest voter in the United States in the person of James Gardner, who is only 38 inches tall. He was born in England in 1870 and came to America in 1880, since when he has worked in a mill at Fall River.

Italian army officers are wretchedly paid. A Sub-Lieutenant's salary is 1900 lire ($380) a year, which, after paying the taxes and the official expenses, including his uniform, leaves him about $17 a month for his board and lodging.

The jewel casket of the Dowager Empress of Russia is the most famous in the world, from a gem point of view. Hardly second to it is that of the Empress of Austria, whose black pearls are noted throughout Europe for their extreme beauty and rarity.

Dr. Churchill Julius, Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand, has appeared in public on a tricycle. He is very unconventional. Some time ago he insisted on laying the last brick on the restored spire of his cathedral, and was hoisted up in a chair at the end of a rope.

What has become of the white pearls of the Empress Eugenie, sold at the close of the Franco-Prussian war, has never been made known. The value of these was some $60,000, and they gathered together in a beautiful necklace that frequently graced the neck of that unfortunate Queen.

At Bad-Homburg, a workman, a Social Democrat, who had been condemned to five days' imprisonment, refused to accept the pardon of the Emperor, and presented himself to the police, demanding to fulfill his term of imprisonment. The magistrate said he could not grant his demand, and the workman left the Court highly discontented.

One of East Hartford's citizens reports that he performed a sleight-of-hand trick one night recently without knowing it. A glass lamp was on a bench about four feet from the floor. In turning around he knocked the lamp from the bench. The lamp turned completely over without breaking or putting out the flame.

A rich gold discovery is reported near Butte, Mont., in the Georgetown district. Nine weeks ago Sam Snyder, a destitute and hungry Butte prospector, trailed a deer over the hills, and accidentally discovered a fabulously rich ledge, which he has been working in secret. The report of men who have inspected the prospect say that Snyder has $1,000,000 in sight.

A druggist's family in Portland had an expensive meal a few days ago. The family had oysters for supper, and in one of the bivalves were found nine pearls. Several of them were of good size, but the oysters had been cooked before the discovery was made. A jeweler, to whom they were shown, stated that if they had been discovered before they had been ruined they would have been worth $100.

"Can you sew buttons on?" asked the leap year new woman. "No," he answered. "Has your father educated you so that you know how to take proper care of a bicycle?" "No, I can't say he ever has." "Then," she said bluntly, "I must crush the fond fancy which was blossoming in my heart. The words I meant to speak must be unsaid. You are not the kind of man who would make home happy."

Latest Fashion Phases.

Capes are made of equal depth all the way round; the best guide is to measure the exact length from the highest part of the shoulder to the waist and cut to that. The flutes also fall at regular intervals and are very decidedly marked.

Very light linings will be preferred, and many pale-gray and other delicate-tinted cloth capes are lined with white satin.

The new dressy capes are often elaborately trimmed. Colored silk collets, covered with black semi-transparent fabrics, black embroidery, lace and handsome jet ornaments, are included among the most attractive novelties of the coming season.

A new idea that is likely to become extremely popular is the use of knots of ribbon made of two or more loops standing straight out in tufts; it is applied to capes and dress bodices.

If the ribbon is not sufficiently stiff to retain its position alone, very fine wire is sewn along the edge; but it is better to dispense with such artifices if possible, and ribbon of the best quality does not require anything.

Milliners use wire bows profusely for trimming hats and bonnets, now made of ribbon, now of lace or net. Narrow ribbon, the edges of which are woven over fine wire, is provided for sewing on lace and muslin bows, also very fine plaitings of straw and horsehair.

Even neck bows are treated in this way, as well as the new wide tulle or Greek net strings with which many of the new capotes are furnished.

The doom of the abnormal dress sleeve is sealed. All gowns now brought from Paris by returned importers and tourists show the bodice finished with a close fitting sleeve, completed at the top by a very modest moderate puff, or slightly larger divided puff. A Vandyke point, Hungarian cap, or tucked or gimp-trimmed chatelaine drapery falling to the elbow.

Fashionable modistes are gradually reducing the circumference of the overwide nine-gored skirts. Models of this great width, however deftly arranged or well hung, looked nothing less than overdone and wobbly. There were too many yards of superfluous floaty goods to look either graceful or stylish, and they could not be flattened or folded to produce that effect.

The smocked waists made of Tartan silk handkerchiefs are mostly worn with skirts of self-color, neutral tints preferably. The smocking or shirring forms the yoke and the sleeves are a modified melon or mutton-leg shape, with cuffs and stock collar of velvet. The pretty satin-striped taffeta silks make charming waists. On some of these the yokes are laid in tucks so that the stripes of one color do not appear at all, thus giving the effect of a yoke of solid color. Some of the new Tartan dresses are very chic and smart looking and are not Tartans proper, but a cleverly arranged mixture of colors in which beautiful shades of green predominate, with a touch of vivid copper or Jacque red to relieve. Black spangled gimp or jetted Vandyke points are used to trim such dresses.

Four and one-half yards is quite full enough for a dress skirt for any figure. More width than this is not productive of any artistic or pleasing results, unless, of course, the skirt is to be pleated or kilted. But a five or seven-gored skirt, well shaped and well hung, is the best model for either tall or short women, or those slender or short.

Stylish and dressy costumes for spring are made of black or dark green satin or corded silk, brocaded with small blossoms and foliage in natural colorings, with a full Stuart cape of black or green velvet, the historic collar wholly covered with rich galloon, whose vari-colored spangles and jewel beads repeat the colors in the brocade. The cape is lined with brocade, and a hat or French toque en suite makes an elegant finish.

There is a general tendency to discard all stiff interlinings in the gowns for next season, employing the crinoline, haircloth, moreen or other lining fabric for an entirely separate underskirt. Some new silk skirts fashioned by high-class modistes carry out this idea, being faced with real haircloth or moreen, and trimmed round the bottom with piped silk frills about three inches wide. Less expensive skirts are also made of moreen or haircloth alone, some fashioned with a closely fitted yoke, with gores on the front and sides, a ruffle of the goods at the hem, and four box-pleated flounces at the back.

Lapped skirt gores buttoned at the top, with real or simulated buttonholes on the silk-lined flaps, are a feature of some of the new gowns. French model in gray-blue cloth has a pretty arabesque design in iridescent braid around the skirt-hem, and accompanying the gown is a chic little triple-caped wrap of the cloth braided to match. This is about 20 inches long from the top of the braided standing collar to the edge of the lowest cape, and is lined with shot silk. The fronts are finished with long loops and ends of satin ribbon three inches wide. The natty jacket bodice has a bias seamless back, with braided revers, and the medium-sized mutton-leg sleeves are closely lapped below the elbow and buttoned half the length of the forearm.

A marked characteristic of some of the French materials of the spring is various handsome mixtures of silk and wool woven in diagonals, in cords, and Persian designs. These produce the iridescent effect still so popular, one of the simplest being a silk woof of one color coming to the surface in diagonal threads on a soft wool warp of a contrasting color. Thus, reseda silk is interwoven with brown wool, violet or blue silk with fawn and soft wood color, and different beautiful shades of green silk are blended with old rose and amber wools. These make elegant costumes trimmed with iridescent passementeries and buttons that repeat their artistic color blendings. They cost from $2 to $3 a yard, but require but small patterns, as they are fifty inches wide.

Mohair still retains its universal favor, and this coming season will appear in new pretty varieties in serge, armure, basket and whipcord weaves, and also in many handsome colors. Black crepons with brilliantly colored figures on the wavy background will be used for elegant Lenten dinners and teas, and for wedding receptions. And these, forty inches wide, cost from $2 to $7 a yard.

Every season fashion selects some particular color as special favorite, though rivals may run it very closely. She has now declared for blue, and this is to rival green and brown. Spring textiles will show many pretty shades, also color-mixtures, in which blue will predominate. It is not always easy to associate a particular shade with the name applied to it, but we are familiar with butcher's blue and torquoise—the latter is one of the most prominent of the new blue shades—also cornflower and peacock blue, which is more or less green, and silvery sky blue—all these reflect the color of the objects from which they derive their designations. But untraveled people get but hazy notions of Mediterranean and Baltic blues, and one needs to behold the uniform of a French soldier to be wholly at rest about "gendarme" blue; also a revival this season in cloth and fancy silks and wool mixtures.

It may be briefly stated that no color needs more careful selection than does blue. I have more than once advised women of the "neutral type" never to select decided colors. Very fair and very dark women can best venture upon strong contrasts, but so long as there are pretty color mixtures and shot effects in silk, satin, and silk and wool blends, women of no decided coloring can always array themselves smartly and becomingly, and it may be here said, for the satisfaction of those who belong to the "neutral type," that looks of this class are very likely to wear the best in the end. The brilliant brunette in her dark beauty, enhanced by rich becoming hues, is indeed resplendent, but the decadence in her looks when it takes place is usually more marked than it is in the case of the less striking beauty, and very blonde women, supremely lovely in youth, are almost certain, with advance of years, to lose the dazzling complexion that generally accompanies blonde hair. Rarely has the "neutral woman" the pang of hearing—accidentally, of course—that she has "so terribly changed." Verily the world is full of compensation! Shot silks, delicately flowered, are a wise choice for the neutral sister. The blurred effect of their blossoms softens the metallic lustre of the silk ground, and renders the material far less trying than a solid one.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

It is well to remember that plain paste may be improved to the flaky level of puff paste if it is rolled thin, folded and put in the refrigerator over night.

In cleaning enamelled saucepans, wash inside and out with hot water and soda. Then scour with a mixture of salt and fine sand, two parts sand to one of salt. Rinse with hot water and dry.

To make a good orange flavoring, take the skins of the oranges and boil one pound of them until perfectly tender. Chop them fine, and to one gill of the water in which the skins have been boiled add one pound of brown sugar and the skins. Boil all together until very thick and then put into a glass jar to keep until ready for use.

A salad of celery and English walnuts is delicious to serve with a little dinner. Cut the celery into small pieces and mix with it one-third the quantity of English walnut meats broken in two and enough mayonnaise to moisten it well. Garnish with young, tender lettuce leaves and serve.

Screens with frames of enamelled wood, pink, blue, buff or pale green, are charming in bedrooms where they and the coverings correspond in daintiness and coloring with the rest of the room. Pretty candle shades may be made by covering the frames with gray-colored silk, and over it laying a covering of quite open cream-white lace. Guipure lace is often used. Small silk flowers such as poppies, roses, and violets are often used to cover such shades.

A little salt sprinkled on a hot stove will remove any disagreeable odor.

If a small piece of bread is put upon the point of the knife while peeling and cutting onions it will prevent the tears from flowing.

The mustard used for salads by both the English and French is frequently mixed with Madeira, sherry and other wines.

A favorite as well as nourishing drink for invalids is barley water. To prepare it place one quart of water in a saucepan over the fire. Wash well two ounces of pearl barley and throw into the water. Bring it to a boiling point, then add lemon and sugar to suit the taste. Draw the pan to the back of the fire and simmer gently two hours. Strain and cover until cold.

To brighten and freshen carpets sprinkle them with tea leaves or wet papers and sweep thoroughly but lightly. Grease spots may be drawn out by covering the places with coarse brown or butcher's paper and then passing over them a warm flatiron. Put a little ox gall in a pan of warm water and with a fresh cloth wrung quite dry again go over the carpet. To prevent moths under carpets use coarsely ground black pepper mixed with camphor, and strew quickly about the edges or wherever the moths are to be found.

Lemons may be kept fresh and good a long time by putting them in an open stone crock and covering them with cold water. The water should be changed twice a week. Lemons treated in this way will become ripe and juicy.

A dainty and attractive tea table may be arranged with very little expense, and once established it will be found indispensable. An ebony or ivory coating is sufficient to modernize any small table, whatever may have been its history, though the legs will also in most cases need to be somewhat shortened. A set of linen covers, fashioned to fit the top, may be quickly and prettily embroidered in linen or silk. The brass or copper tea kettle, with its little alcohol lamp, has become so necessary an article that its price is greatly reduced, and a very serviceable little affair may be procured for $1. In collecting the tea cups, it is well to remember that old china is often prettier than new, and that if one has any old-fashioned bits, it is not necessary to make any extra purchases. The same holds true with regard to silver—the dainty spoons, sugar tongs, lemon fork and other trifles that go to make up the equipment. A tea ball or strainer is preferable to a teapot, and is not expensive.

Use soapy water when making starch. The clothes will have a glossier appearance, and the irons will be less likely to stick.

Chemists say it takes more than twice as much sugar to sweeten preserves, sauces and the like if put in when they begin to cook, as it does to add it after the process is accomplished.

It is not always easy to start a fruit-jar cover. Instead of wrenching the hand, bringing on blisters, simply invert the jar and place the top in hot water for a minute. Then try it and you will find it turns quite easily.

Silk must never be ironed, as the heat takes all the life out of it, and makes it seem stringy and flabby. If, however, you wish to press out bits of silk and ribbon for work use an iron only moderately hot, and place two thicknesses of paper between that and the silk.

A valuable assistant on silver cleaning day is a lemon. If silver, after it is cleaned, is rubbed with a piece of lemon and then washed and well dried, it gets a white brilliancy which it seldom has otherwise, and will keep clean longer than with ordinary cleansing.

It is not at all surprising that women are almost burned to death when they know no chemistry. The cook who wore a celluloid corset around the range would have known had she known chemistry, that celluloid was chiefly composed of camphor and gun cotton, and that gun cotton is one of the highest of high explosives.

Fur, after some years' wear, will look much improved if cleaned with new bran previously heated in the oven. Rub the hot bran well into the fur with a piece of flannel, shake the fur to remove all particles, then brush thoroughly. The fur will clean more easily if the lining and wadding are first removed, but first removal is not absolutely needful. The flat, oily look which makes its appearance in the neck portion of furs long in use is mostly, if not wholly, removed by means of the hot bran. Rub the fur the wrong way.

The black lace that is so limp and forlorn looking can be made good as new by a very simple process given in the daily paper. Wash it in soft, soapy water, then rinse in clear water, squeezing it in the hand, instead of wringing it. Dip in cold coffee, in which a little gum arabic has been dissolved, and press smoothly on a window pane to dry. The coffee darkens it, the gum arabic gives it the desired stiffness, and, when dried in this way, no ironing is necessary. It is then ready to be used in any way you wish.

Good Fruit Dish.—Slice thin three small oranges, and boil in a quart of water till tender; then add brown sugar to taste, and boil a quarter of an hour longer. Very good to eat with bread. This also makes a good pudding, spread between layers of bread and butter in a pie dish, and baked an hour and a half. Garnish top with bread crumbs and bits of butter, and take care to have plenty of liquid. Small sour oranges make a good dish. Take care not to cook the seeds.

Sweetbreads Larded.—Trim a couple of sweetbreads, soak them half an hour in tepid water, then parboil them for a few minutes, and lay them in cold water; when quite cold, take them out, dry them, and lard them thickly with fine strips of bacon. Put a slice of fat bacon into a stew-pan with some onions, carrots, a bunch of sweet herbs, pepper, salt, and spices to taste, and a small quantity of rich stock; lay the sweetbreads on this, and let them gently stew till quite done, basting the top occasionally with the liquor. When cooked, strain the liquor, skim off fat, reduce it almost to a glaze, brown the larded side of the sweetbreads with a salamander, and serve with the sauce.

EDUCATE THE HEAD, THE HEART, AND THE HAND.—Every boy should have his head, his heart, and his hand educated. Let this truth never be forgotten. By the proper education of the head, he will be taught what is good and what is evil, what is wise and what is foolish, what is right and what is wrong.

By the proper education of the heart he will be taught to love what is good, wise, and right, and to hate what is evil, foolish, and wrong. And by proper education of the hand, he will be enabled to supply his wants, to add to his comforts, and to assist those around him. The brightest objects of a good education are to reverence and obey God, and to love and serve mankind.

Everything that helps us in attaining these objects is of great value, and everything that hinders us is comparatively worthless. When wisdom reigns in the head, and love in the heart, the man is ever ready to do good; order and peace reign around, and sin and sorrow are almost unknown.

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, say "Way Down on the Swanee River," either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC, IMMEDIATELY correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. Postage stamps, 2's, taken. Address—

THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.,
726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

A QUEEN'S DINNER.

BEING asked to dine and sleep at Windsor Castle is a great honor (writes a lady contributor), but as papa and mamma are accustomed to it, they were not so excited as I was, who was going for the first time.

I must say, however, that it seemed a little flat that we should be told what train to come by, so that we should arrive just before dinner, precisely as if we were going to stay at the most ordinary country house.

It would have been so much more in keeping if we had driven with four horses and postillions all the way. I said this to mamma, but she laughed, and said that the Queen herself went by rail, and that I had been reading too many novels lately—which was not fair argument.

Until we got right to the Castle it was all just like any other journey, and I found myself actually yawning as we drove out of the station.

Once, however, the carriage had turned in under George IV.'s Gateway there was no possibility of anything but intense excitement. There was the very entrance which the Queen herself uses.

There was the State Entrance for guests who are invited to theatricals. There was the Round Tower, in which the Earl of Surrey was confined, and where Herne the Hunter visited him.

And, most wonderful of all, there were the windows of the royal apartments, and it was just possible that the Queen might be taking a peep at us.

Papa says that the Round Tower was restored early in this reign, and that it is about as likely that the Queen was taking a peep at us as that Herne visited the Earl of Surrey in the Tower.

When papa says things in a certain tone of voice I generally suspect that he is laughing at me, though he looks as grave as a judge. But I cannot see what there was to laugh at on this occasion.

Well, we were shown to our rooms, and then, oh! the fuss and flurry, and the dreadful haste and excitement, for you know it takes much longer to get on the kind of costume which one wears when one is going to dine with the Queen than to get into an ordinary dinner-gown.

Why the mere doing of one's hair—with all that one has got to wear on it—is enough to break one's heart when one is afraid of being late.

However, it was all done at last. So I followed mamma out into the grand corridor, and we proceeded slowly towards the dining room. It was a wonderful place, that corridor.

Imagine an endlessly long lofty apartment, lighted by tall windows on one side, which looked out on the courtyard—imagine this running round two sides of the great quadrangle—and on the inner side innumerable doors opening into suites on suites of rooms of all kinds—guest-chambers, including a special suite for the Prince and Princess of Wales, and another (over the gate-way), known as the Tapestry apartments, which are given to other distinguished visitors, such as the Duke and Duchess of Coburg or the Empress Frederick—the Queen's own bedroom and boudoir, the three drawingrooms, the private and the state diningrooms, and the suite once devoted to the use of Princess Beatrice and her husband.

It was furnished just like a large drawing room. Portraits, pictures, and cabinets filled with priceless china lined the walls, and there were endless seats and sofas scattered down the length. I stopped before the bust and Bible of General Gordon, but mamma called to me peremptorily, and we went on again.

About half way down the left arm of the corridor a group of people were standing. These were the other guests.

We had scarcely joined them when the Master of the Household and some other officials, all dressed in Windsor uniform, made their appearance and directed us to arrange ourselves in two rows, the men on one side and the ladies on the other, towards the door of the Oak Room—for as we were a small party we were to dine in the Queen's private dining room, which is called the Oak Room, and is just over the royal entrance, and not in the state dining room, which is at the other end of the corridor.

Mamma, who was the most important lady present, was farthest from the door, and I stood next to her as the next most important, which was rather absurd, because I was quite the youngest of all the ladies, and two of the others were wives of two of the principal Ministers.

The tiresome result, too, was that I went in with one of the Ministers, who might have been about sixty, and the other Minister's wife, who was very stout and deaf, fell to the officer of the guard, whom I know well and had often danced with in town. Highly ridiculous, wasn't it?

We waited a few minutes, and I had just made out that the portrait facing me was that of Lord Beaconsfield, when there was a fuss; somebody said something, and there was the Queen in the black dress and cap with the white veil, looking just like her photographs, and there were we all curtseying away like a row of schoolgirls, and the men bowing like Chinese mandarins. Poor Mrs. X——, the stout Minister's wife—I mean the Minister's stout wife—got perfectly scarlet with the exertion, and I felt a curious thrill run all down my back, while my heart seemed to be sticking in my throat.

I don't know why, but I always feel like this whenever I see her Majesty.

So we went into a blaze of lights, gold plate, and scarlet liveries, and sat down just like at an ordinary dinner. My partner proved to be rather a nice old man, who talked to me a good deal in a whisper. He told me that it was not etiquette to speak louder, which I knew already; and that it was not etiquette to talk very much, which sounded rather dull.

The proper thing seemed to be to eat as much as possible, talk very little, and keep one's eye on the Queen, in the hope that she might honor one by addressing one.

I must say that this honor was the very last thing I hoped for, and if it had been conferred on me I should probably have made an idiot of myself.

However, her Majesty talked to the older people, but there was not much in the way of conversation, chiefly owing to that stupid etiquette. If I had been the Queen I should have said:

"Please consider etiquette dispensed with during dinner, and try to look less like galvanised mummies, and to talk like rational beings."

In spite of intense awe, I nearly laughed now and then to see mamma sitting up so prim and saying so very little, for at home, you know, we all listen to mamma as if she were an oracle, and so does everyone who comes to the house, which is a little trying at times.

When the Queen rose we followed her to the corridor again, and not to the drawing rooms, as I had hoped. The rest was very short. Her Majesty went round and spoke to each of the guests.

She spoke to me again, and asked me if I was fond of dancing, and I answered quite truthfully:

"Yes, ma'am."

I thought it very nice and clever of her to hit on such an easy question for me, because if she had talked to me about children's dinners in the East End, as she did to Mrs. X——, I should have been obliged to tell her, in spite of all the etiquette in the world, that I knew nothing about it, and mamma wouldn't like me to go there.

That practically ended my dinner with the Queen, for Her Majesty soon departed, and the rest of the evening was quite informal. The next morning we went away early after breakfast, and did not see her Majesty again.

FRIGHTS FATAL TO THE NERVES.

"No; the fact does not appear to have been generally noticed, but it is curious that in cases where hair has been known to entirely change its color through sudden shock to the system, that hair has invariably been of a very dark shade," remarked a well known specialist in nervous disorders the other day, when the writer mentioned a recently reported instance of the phenomenon referred to.

"Probably, however, it may be accounted for by the fact that people of a lighter complexion—especially the very fair—usually possess a larger amount of local vitality than dark haired persons.

"Yes, undoubtedly, instantaneous whitening of the hair through some sudden fright occurs outside fiction. Two or three instances have come within my own experience.

"Some time back, for example, I prescribed for a lady, well known in country society, whose case proved the possibility of such a transformation in the most literal sense.

"Her husband—an explorer—was reported to have perished abroad. She married again at the end of two years, and came face to face with her first husband as she left the church with her second.

"It appears that he had merely been taken a prisoner by an African tribe, and had at last succeeded in escaping; and so tremendous was the shock to her at seeing him, in such trying circumstances, that her hair went absolutely white within a few minutes, and had not recovered a trace of its original color up till the time of her death last year.

"Then, quite recently, an even more dramatic case in point came under my notice. The victim—if one may put it so—was a medical student training for his degree in surgery at one of the large hospitals.

"By some oversight he was locked in the dissecting-room after a lecture one evening, and left there for half an hour. At the time of entering the room his hair had been all but black; afterwards, it was no darker than ordinary cigar-ash, and has remained so since.

"Of course, there was a fright to account for it. It seems he had stayed behind to experiment upon a body with a galvanic apparatus, for the purpose of testing the sensibility of the nerves soon after death. No doubt he inadvertently increased the power of the electric current, for the body suddenly sprang off the slab as though endowed with new life, and toppled upon him as he fell with the natural shock.

"He heard someone look in and then lock the door, but was unable to raise a shout. It was half an hour, in fact, before his power of speech returned, and then it was found that the scare had completely dried up the moisture at the roots of the hair, with the singular result mentioned. He afterwards said that, at the moment of the shock, he had experienced a sensation as though every hair on his head had become a red-hot wire.

"Then, for a long time, I treated a military officer whose experience was very similar—although, perhaps, instantaneously is scarcely the correct word in his case. He served throughout the Egyptian campaign, and one night, whilst skirmishing after an engagement, was shot so badly that he was left for dead.

"He came out of a long swoon to find himself, as he imagined, buried alive, he having been placed with a heap of bodies to be conveyed back to camp. "All's well that ends well" could hardly be said of his case. The temporary horror of his situation had been such that, when discovered, his hair was almost as white as snow, and seems likely to remain so.

"But perhaps the most striking example of the kind that was ever vouched for was one where a Welshman, waking one night after a terrible dream in which he was made to believe that he had been convicted of a crime and led to the scaffold, found that his hair had lost every vestige of its color in what could have been no more than a few minutes. In his case there was nothing more deadly to account for the phenomenon than the fact that he had gone to bed immediately after taking a heavy supper."

CURIOUS TREE GROWTHS.—In the city of Norwich the church of St. Benedict is provided with a round tower having a series of windows at the top. From one of these issues a tree that rises several yards above the platform of the tower, and which is growing very vigorously.

At Bicknoller, in Somersetshire, upon a tower of a church there grows an evergreen oak which has already reached a height of five feet. It is well known and is much wondered at by tourists who visit the West of England.

There may be observed, too, a sycamore which has been growing for more than half a century upon the tower of the little parochial church of St. Petrochius at Clanaborough, in North Devon. It has inserted its roots so deeply into the masonry as to threaten the solidity of the building.

A few years ago the town of Stony Stratford possessed a plant curiosity of the same nature.

In the wake of a great fire in 1742 one of the few structures that remained standing was the tower of the St. Mary Magdalen church.

A bird doubtless carried a seed to the summit of this, and there soon appeared a tree that buried its roots so deeply that it had to be pulled up in order to save the tower from falling in.

THE great foe of life is indulgence under one form or another. The letting down of the standard endangers the length of the course. To be safe one must be circumspect, prudent, rational, clear in judgment, firm in self-control. To the command over his appetite a man will owe length of days; and not length of days only, not mere continuity, but that which gives to continuity its significance—namely, the power to enjoy, which makes prolonged existence something worthy of being called a "lease of life," and not a stretch of drowsy stupor. As vitality comes to the system, it beats off its foes, and conquers one after another the advancing years.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

WILL CURE

No matter how violent or excruciating the pain the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Cripple, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with diseases may suffer.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

Will Afford Instant Ease.

For headache (whether sick or nervous), toothache, neuralgia, rheumatism, lumbago, pains and weakness in the back, spine or kidneys, pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints and pains of all kinds, the application of Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure.

Instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation and cures congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or mucous membranes.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

CURES AND PREVENTS

Colds, Coughs, Sore Throat, Influenza, Bronchitis, Pneumonia, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Headache, Toothache, Asthma, Difficult Breathing.

CURES THE WORST PAINS in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this advertisement need any one SUFFER WITH PAIN.

INTERNALLY—A half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all Internal pains.

Malaria in Its Various Forms Cured and Prevented.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague and all other Malarious, Bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of Radway's Ready Relief with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French brandy or bitters as a stimulant.

Price, 50 cents per bottle. Sold by all Druggists.

Radway's Pills

MILD BUT EFFECTIVE

Purely vegetable, act without pain, elegantly coated, tasteless, small and easy to take. Radway's Pills assist nature, stimulating to healthful activity the liver, bowels and other digestive organs, leaving the bowels in a natural condition without any bad after effects.

CURE

Sick Headache,
Female Complaints,
Biliousness,
Constipation,
Piles

—AND—

All Liver Disorders

RADWAY'S PILLS cause perfect digestion, complete absorption and healthful regularity.

Price 25c Per Box. Sold by Druggists, or sent by mail.

Send to DR. RADWAY & CO., Lock Box 365, New York, for Book of Advice.

Humorous.

A ONE-TIME FRIEND.

Old tooth as last you've lost your grip,
My friend for many a year,
For then you never made me dip
By toothache so severe.

You long did serve me well and right
Ne'er gave me much of jaw,
And even if we'd had a fight
It would have been a draw.

Some teeth like mankind often will
Make streets to leave their place,
But if they get of gold their fill
They will not change their base.

But it was different far with you
For gold you gave no chin,
As if you knew your debtor true
Was rather short of tin.

—W. M.

Head over heels—Everybody.

A man of power—The motorman.

Always to the point—The compass.

A favorable impression—A lover's kiss.

The hens will soon be warbling their spring lays.

In the morning a man gets up; in the evening he gets supper.

What can both cook and be cooked at the same time?—A potato can.

What is it we can't do very well without, yet we turn it out?—The gas.

"He has left a void that cannot be filled," touchingly remarked a bank director of an absconding cashier.

"I fear I must tear myself away," wailed the dejected lover. He did, and the dog's mouth was full of pants.

A young student wants us to tell him why, if W-o-r-c-e-s-t-e-r spells Wooster, why R-o-c-h-e-s-t-e-r don't spell Rooster.

Master, addressing his class: Silence! This is not to be put up with. Directly I begin to talk a stupid fellow begins to chatter.

Passenger, on vestibule limited: Porter, does this train stop at Dinkeyville?

Porter: No, sah; she doan't even hesitate dar, sah.

Fuzzy: I don't believe that errand boys, as a rule, are slow, do you?

Buzzy: No, indeed! Why, I know a boy in particular who can read the whole of a penny novel while he's walking half a mile.

Hobson: Don't you think that's a poor site for a medical college?

Wigwag: Yes; but they're going to erect an additional building which will improve it. It's an eye hospital.

You cannot always judge from outside appearances. The pie which presents a tempting exterior may have a soggy undercrust, and interiorly have only the nutritive qualities of a pneumatic tire.

Hoax: We had a fire in our church the other day.

Joax: Was there much loss?

Hoax: No, everything was saved but the organ. None of the firemen could play on it.

Blobbs: I've raised many a family in my time.

Blobbs: Why, I never knew you were married.

Blobbs: But I used to run the elevator in an apartment house.

Teacher: Thomas, I saw you laugh just now. What were you laughing about?

Tommy: I was just thinking about something.

Teacher: You have no business thinking during school hours. Don't let it occur again.

A little boy of six summers was sent one morning to call his grandfather to breakfast. The old gentleman snored very hard, and as the boy pushed open the door he was frightened at the unusual noise. He rushed back to his mother, exclaiming:

"Ma, grandpapa has been barkin' at me."

A Hibernian sportsman tried to shoot a sparrow with an old Queen Anne musket. When he fired, the bird, with a chirrup or two, flew away unconcerned in the foreground, and the marksman was swiftly and noiselessly laid on his spine in the background. Picking himself up, and shaking his fist at the bird, he exclaimed:

"Be Jabers! ye wouldn't a chirruped if ye'd been at this ind of the gun."

"Father," said the little boy, looking up from his picture book, "if I ask you a question, will you answer it?"

"Certainly," was the affable reply.

"And not get angry?"

"Of course not."

"Now say it's time I was in bed?"

"I won't do any of those things."

"Well, what I want to know is where does a snake begin when it wags its tail."

"This new light they have discovered that enables one to take a photograph of a man's bones without skinning him will be a terrible factor in the wars of the future," said Wilkins. "Take a bearer of a message, for instance; he is captured, and, after the old-fashioned method, swallows the paper; out comes the photographer, takes his internal picture, reproduces the swallowed message, and there's all the poor messenger's devotion gone for nothing."

A GREAT PAINTER'S EARLY STRUGGLES.—The great French painter Bastien Lepage, who died lately, was pursued by unmerciful disaster through his youth in his efforts to study art. His mother worked in the fields to keep the sickly boy at school.

At fifteen he went alone to Paris, starved for seven years, painted without success, but still painted. He had just finished a picture, which he hoped to send to the Salon, when Paris was besieged, and he rushed with his comrades to the trenches. On the first day a shell fell into his studio and destroyed his picture, and another shell burst at his feet, wounding him.

He was carried home, and lay ill and idle for two years. Then he returned to Paris, and, reduced to absolute want, painted cheap fans for a living.

One day a manufacturer of some patent medicine ordered a picture from him to illustrate its virtues. Lepage, who was always sincere, gave his best work to this advertisement.

He painted a landscape in the April sunlight; the leaves of tender green quivered in the breeze, a group of beautiful young girls gathered around a fountain from which the Elixir of Youth sprang in a bubbling stream.

Lepage believed that there was real merit in his work at last.

"Let me offer it at the Salon," he asked his patron.

The manufacturer was delighted.

"But first paint a rainbow arching over the fountain," he said, "with the name of my medicine upon it."

Lepage refused. "Then I will not pay you a sou for the picture." The price of this picture meant bread for months, and the painter had long needed bread. The chance of admission to the Salon was small. He hesitated. Then he silenced his hunger, and carried the canvas to the Salon. It was admitted. Its great success ensured Lepage a place in public recognition and his latter work a place among the greatest of living artists.

THE following occurs in a well-written work by Dr. Clarke of Boston: "To attempt to assimilate the education of boys and girls is to ignore a structural differentiation, to render abnormal the performance of the functions of the body, and thus not only to damage the parts so interfered with, but also to disturb the relations that should exist between the brain and the affected organ."

Webster's International Dictionary

Specimen pages, etc., sent on application.

Successor of the "Unabridged."

Invaluable in Office, School, and Home.

WEBSTER'S INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY

Standard of the U. S. Gov't Printing Office, the U. S. Supreme Court, the State Supreme Courts, and of nearly all the Schoolbooks. Warmly commended by every State Superintendent of Schools.

THE BEST FOR EVERYBODY
BECAUSE

It is easy to find the word wanted.
It is easy to ascertain the pronunciation.
It is easy to trace the growth of a word.
It is easy to learn what a word means.

G. & C. MERRIAM CO., Publishers, Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.

DOLLARD & CO.,

1223 CHESTNUT ST. Philadelphia, Premier Artistes IN HAIR.

Inventors of the CELEBRATED GO HAMER VENTILATING WIG, ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE, and Manufacturers of Every Description of Ornamental Hair for Ladies and Gentlemen.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

TOUPEES AND SCALPS. INCHES.	FOR WIGS. INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.	No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 2.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.	No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.	No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 22, '93. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract of Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS.
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.

1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING
LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.

None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

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PIANOS AND ORGANS

Were Awarded FOUR MEDALS AND DIPLOMAS, also chosen for 32 STATE AND FOREIGN BUILDINGS AT THE WORLD'S FAIR. Twenty Medals and Diplomas were taken by makers of the raw materials used by me in constructing the Crowns.

The Crown is the only Piano which contains the **Wonderful Orchestral Attachment and Practice Clavier**, the greatest invention of the age and by the use of which you can imitate perfectly the **Harp, Zither, Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar, Clavicord, Dulcimer, Spinet, Harpsichord, Music Box, Autoharp, Bag Pipe, Etc.**

THE CROWN IS THE ONLY PIANO WORTH $1000.00 MORE THAN IT COSTS.

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GEO. P. BENT, Manufacturer,
948-958 Washington Boul., CHICAGO, U. S. A.

Don't buy a Piano or Organ until you hear and examine a "Crown" and get prices.

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Anthracite Coal. No Smoke. No Cinders

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Buffalo Day Express, Parlor and Dining Car, Buffalo and Chicago Exp. Sleeping Cars, daily 9.40 a m; daily 4.32 p m, 9.45 p m.

Williamsport Express, week-days, 8.38, 10.05 a m, 4.00 p m. Daily (Sleeper) 11.30 p m.

Lock Haven, Clearfield and Du Bois Express (Sleeper) daily, except Saturday, 11.30 p m.

FOR NEW YORK.

Leave Reading Terminal, 4.10, 7.30, (two-hour train), 8.30, 9.30, 11.30 a m, 12.50, 1.30, 2.35, 5.00, 6.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night. Sundays—4.10, 8.30, 9.30 a m, 12.30, 6.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night.

Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 3.55, 8.08, 9.13, 10.18, 11.14 a m, 12.37 (Dining car), 2.38, 3.45, 6.12, 8.19 (dining car), 11.45 p m. Sunday 3.55, 8.08, 10.18 a m, 12.14, 3.45, 8.12, 8.19 (dining car), 11.45 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.00, 8.45 10.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 6.35, 8.00, 9.00 a m, 1.00, 2.00, 4.30, 5.30, 6.30, 9.45 p m. Sundays—6.27, 8.30, 9.00 a m, 1.0s, 4.30, 6.23, 9.45 p m, (9.45 p m, does not connect for Easton on Sunday.)

FOR SCHUYLKILL VALLEY POINTS.

For Phœnixville and Pottstown—Express, 8.30, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.43, 11.05 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 8.22, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30, 11.35 a m, 6.00, p m.

For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.30, 7.42 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 8.22, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30 a m, 6.00 p m.

For Lebanon and Harrisburg—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 7.30 a m.

For Pottsville—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.42 a m, 1.42 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 6.00 p m.

For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves: Week-days—Express, 9.00, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00, p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.30, 5.30 p m. Sundays—Express, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.45 p m.

Parlor Cars on all express trains.

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